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あしたのジョー 7

KC

原作／高森朝雄
漫画／ちばてつや

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7

TOMORROW'S JOE

WRITTEN BY ASAO TAKAMORI (KAJIWARA IKKI)
DRAWN BY CHIBA TETSUYA

宿敵力石徹との対決を念願に、矢吹丈は、丹下段平が新設した丹下拳闘クラブでプロボクサーへの練習に励んでいた。

だが、大高会長ら協会幹部の反対で、丹下拳闘クラブは公認されず、丈のプロへの道はとざされてしまった。

一策を抱いた丈は、折から開催中の新人王決定戦の後楽園会場にのり込み、アジア拳じまんの新人王、ウルフ金串にけんかを売り、互格の相打ちを演じてその強いパンチで人々をおどろかせた。

策はあたり、大高会長は、丈をリング上で打ちのめし、金串の人気を挽回しようと、段平にライセンスを許可した。

やがて丈は、待望のプロボクサーとして花々しくデビューしたが、ある日、アジア拳から、報復の念に燃えるウルフ金串との対決試合を申し込まれた……。

★前巻までのあらすじ★

DON'T RUSH TOO MUCH NOW, THE DATE HASN'T EVEN BEEN SET YET.

WHEN'S THE FIGHT GOING TO BE HELD?

HELL YEAH!

YABUKI JOE HAS OFFICIALLY ACCEPTED WOLF KANAGUSHI'S CHALLENGE!

NEGOTIA-TIONS ARE COMPLETE!

THIS IS HEADLINE MATERIAL!

JOE, LOOK THIS WAY FOR ME!

HEY, OLD MAN! WHAT'RE YOU GETTING SO FLUS-TERED ABOUT!? C'MON, BE A MAN!

JOE...

A REAL MAN GIVES A CLEAR AND DIRECT ANSWER UPFRONT IN TIMES LIKE THESE, YOU KNOW!

WOLF, CAN I GET A PICTURE OF YOU DOING THE V FOR VICTORY SIGN?

WHEN AND WHERE WILL THE FIGHT BE?

I THINK WOLF'S TECHNIQUES WILL GIVE HIM THE EDGE.

OH PLEASE! THERE AIN'T NOBODY OUT THERE WHO CAN BEAT JOE'S SPECIAL CROSS-COUNTER!

WHO DO YOU THINK'LL WIN?

OH MAN, I HAVE TO WATCH THIS FIGHT NO MATTER ***WHAT!*** I CAN HARDLY CONTAIN MY EXCITEMENT!

HEH HEH HEH

GULP!

WHAT! ARE YOU SERIOUS!?

WELL SCREW THIS FIGHT, LET'S GO SEE WOLF AND JOE!

AH! IT SEEMS LIKE JOE THE BRAWLER IS GONNA BE FIGHTING WOLF KANAGUSHI!

WHAT'S GOING ON OVER THERE?

DAYUM.
WOLF AND JOE'S GOING TO FIGHT AND WHOEVER WINS WILL ADVANCE TO 8 ROUND MATCHES FROM THEREON.
DID YOU HEAR THAT?

H-HEY!
YEAH, LET'S GO SEE!
THIS AIN'T NO TIME TO BE BOXING!

EXIT

ALL YOU'VE BEEN DOING IS NAGGING AND COM-PLAINING!

JEEZ, WHAT'RE YOU MAD ABOUT!?

AFTER YOU WILLINGLY IGNORED ME, YOUR COACH, AND DECIDED TO THROW LUCK'S DICE WITHOUT THINKING.

I'M MERELY ASKING YOU WHETHER OR NOT YOU CAN TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR WHATEVER HAPPENS,

I'M NOT COMPLAIN-ING...

THAT WOLF AIN'T AS GREAT AS EVERYONE MAKES HIM OUT TO BE.

ALL HE'S DOING IS GETTING IN MY WAY TO THE TOP SO I THOUGHT THIS WOULD BE A GREAT CHANCE TO TAKE CARE OF THIS NUISANCE ONCE AND FOR ALL!

YOU AND YOUR LUCK'S DICE OR WHATEVER...

TALK ABOUT BEING OVER-DRAMATIC...

THAT'S ALL I WANTED TO DO. NOTHING MORE, NOTHING LESS!

THE CRUEL REALITY OF THE BOXING WORLD!

IF NOT WOLF, THEN BY THE WORLD OF BOXING!

WHAT, YOU MEAN BY THAT WILD MUTT!?

BUT KEEP ON PUSHING YOUR LUCK LIKE THAT WITHOUT THINKING AND YOU'LL END UP FLAT ON YOUR FACE.

YOU'RE FREE TO THINK WHAT YOU WANT,

WHAT?

GOD, IT'S JUST SO FRUSTRATING TO EVEN TALK TO YOU.

HMPH, WHAT A LOAD OF BULL!

FLAT ON MY FACE...?

IF IT WERE JUST A FEW DAYS AGO, I WOULD'VE THOUGHT THAT YOU COULD TAKE HIM ON TOO...

DO YOU REALLY THINK THAT I'D LOSE TO WOLF? IS THAT IT!?

YOU LOOKED LIKE YOU WERE ABOUT TO WET YOUR PANTS OUT THERE IN FRONT OF THE CROWD TONIGHT!

WELL I'M RIGHT, AREN'T I!?

IT WAS THE LOOK OF A DEFEATED LOSER, A LOOK FILLED WITH FEAR.

BACK DURING YOUR FIRST MATCH... I SAW WOLF TREMBLING IN THE STANDS WHEN YOU UNLEASHED YOUR CROSS-COUNTER FOR A KO WIN.

W-WHAT!?

I GET THE FEELING YOU'RE NOT MUCH OF A THREAT ANYMORE.

BUT IT'S DIFFERENT NOW.

AS IF HE WERE A VIPER THAT FOUND A PREY.

THERE WAS FIRE BEHIND HIS EYES...

HE HAD THE LOOK OF AN ENTIRELY DIFFERENT PERSON.

BUT TODAY,

...

THAT "SOMETHING" IS WHY I LOOKED SO NERVOUS OUT THERE TODAY.

HE DEFINITELY HAS SOMETHING PLANNED

AND HIS CALM, CONFIDENT STANCE ONLY MAKES THINGS MORE SUSPICIOUS.

THAT LOOK OF HIS WAS NO NORMAL GAZE

THAT FIERY LOOK AND HIS NEWFOUND CONFIDENCE...

I WONDER WHAT'S THE MEANING BEHIND,

AND ONLY STARED AT ME INTENTLY...

HE DIDN'T SAY A SINGLE WORD TO ME,

HE DID SEEM UNUSUALLY CALM TODAY...

N-NOW THAT I THINK ABOUT IT,

BUT HOW MUCH COULD AN OLD RACOON AND A MANGY MUTT ACCOMPLISH TOGETHER?

AS YOU SAY, THOSE TWO DEFINITELY HAVE SOMETHING UP THEIR SLEEVES.

F-FINE, YOU MADE YOUR POINT!

AND THAT'S WHY I WAS HESITANT IN ACCEPTING THEIR CHALLENGE.

BUT I'LL BE SURE TO LAY HIM FLAT ON THE RING WITH MY CROSS-COUNTER!

THE MEDIA MIGHT MAKE A FUSS ABOUT WOLF BECOMING THE NEXT WORLD CHAMPION,

JUST RELAX AND WATCH.

YOU FOOL...

THAT CROSS-COUNTER OF YOURS IS EXACTLY WHAT I'M WORRIED ABOUT

LET'S NOT KEEP NISHI WAITING ALONE, NOW

NOW THEN, LET'S HURRY BACK TO THE GYM AND START TRAINING!

日新聞 1960

BANTAMWEIGHT'S TWO RISING STARS

THE TWO'S FATED MATCH!!

A MATCH TO DETERMINE WHO WILL ADVANCE TO FIGHTING 8 ROUND MATCHES.

WHO WILL WIN? WOLF THE TECHNICIAN OR JOE THE BRAWLER?

IT'S ALL OVER THE NEWSPAPERS...

WHOA!

スタスタ

スタスタ

THE MEDIA WILL BARE HIS SHAME AND HUMILIATION FOR THE WHOLE WORLD TO SEE AS WELL...

THAT EVEN IF JOE WERE TO BE KO'ED BY WOLF,

PUTTING IT THIS BIG ON THE FRONT PAGE MEANS,

はあ

はあ

DON'T WORRY, JOE CAN DEFINITELY WIN THIS!

HE'S FIRED UP AND TRAINING HARD!

I MEAN, LOOK AT JOE!

W-WHY YOU GOTTA BE SO NEGATIVE LIKE THAT, COACH...

AND .

THIS, YOU MANGY MUTT!

TAKE...

WE'RE HERE FOR ANOTHER INTERVIEW.

BUSY TRAINING, BRAWLER JOE?

THIS, YOU OLD RACOON!

I'M OBVI-OUSLY FEELING

CAN'T YOU TELL?

JUST GREAT!

GETTING ALL F RED UP NOW THAT THE DATE FOR THE MATCH HAS BEEN SET?

LOOKS LIKE YOU'RE WORKING PRETTY HARD.

HOW'S YOUR CONDITION?

ALRIGHT THEN, WE HAVE A COUPLE QUESTIONS FOR YOU.

IF IT'S AN INTERVIEW YOU WANT, I'LL ANSWER IN JOE'S STEAD.

COULD YOU PLEASE NOT INTERFERE WITH HIS TRAINING?

W-WAIT RIGHT THERE...

HUH, WHAT A WEAK ANSWER THAT WAS..

SO HOW COULD I JUST GIVE YOU A DEFINITE ANSWER?

THE WORLD OF BOXING IS AN UNPREDICTABLE ONE IN WHICH A WORLD CHAMPION CAN LOSE TO AN UNRANKED FIGHTER.

OUR CHANCES ?

WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT YOUR CHANCES OF WINNING THIS FIGHT?

HE SEEMS PRETTY TENSE IF YOU ASK ME.

E-EXCUSE US, SIR.

AGH!

WHAT KIND OF REPORTER GOES AROUND ASKING WHAT OUR CHANCES OF WINNING ARE LIKE BEFORE THE MATCH! DO YOU KNUCKLEHEADS KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT BOXING!?

HMPH!

WHAT DID YOU SAY!?

OHH!

AND IN TIME, THE LAST ONE STILL STANDING ON THE RING WILL BE YABUKI JOE FOR SURE!

IF HE KNOCKS ME DOWN 3 TIMES, I'LL JUST KNOCK HIM DOWN 5 TIMES!

I MAY NOT KNOW ABOUT OUR CHANCES OF WINNING BUT OUR CHANCE OF LOSING IS ZERO!

YO OLD MAN! WHY DON'T YOU GIVE THEM AN ANSWER LIKE THIS?

W-WE...
THAT'S...

INSTEAD OF COMING HERE AND BOTHERING US ALL THE TIME WHY DON'T YOU GO OVER TO THE ASIA GYM AND INTERVIEW WOLF FOR A CHANGE!?

ANYWAYS, THAT'S ENOUGH QUESTIONS FOR NOW SO GO AWAY

STOP YAPPIN' AWAY AND GET BACK TO TRAINING!

W-WHAT?

BUT THEY'VE STRICTLY FORBID ALL INTERVIEWS FROM THE MEDIA.

WE WOULD IF WE COULD,

HEH HEH. FINE, FINE.

TO THINK OOTAKA WOULD GO TO SUCH EXTENTS IN HIDING WOLF WHEN HE PREVIOUSLY LOVED TO PARADE WOLF AROUND AS HIS GYM'S NEW POSTER BOY...!

AH...!

I CAN UNDERSTAND DECLINING INTER-VIEWS BUT THEY WON'T EVEN LET ANY OUTSIDERS STEP FOOT INTO THEIR GYM.

TALK ABOUT STRICT.

I WONDER JUST WHAT KIND OF SECRET TRAINING THEY'RE DOING IN THERE...?

THERE REALLY MUST HAVE BEEN SOME-THING TO WOLF'S NEW FIERY GAZE!

T-THIS IS NO ORDINARY THING...

I BET THE ONLY THING THEY'RE PREPARING FOR IS WOLF'S FUNERAL!

SO THEY'RE HIDING, HUH? YEAH, BET THEY'D WANT TO HIDE HOW WEAK WOLF IS TO THE MEDIA!

HUMPH,

HUFF

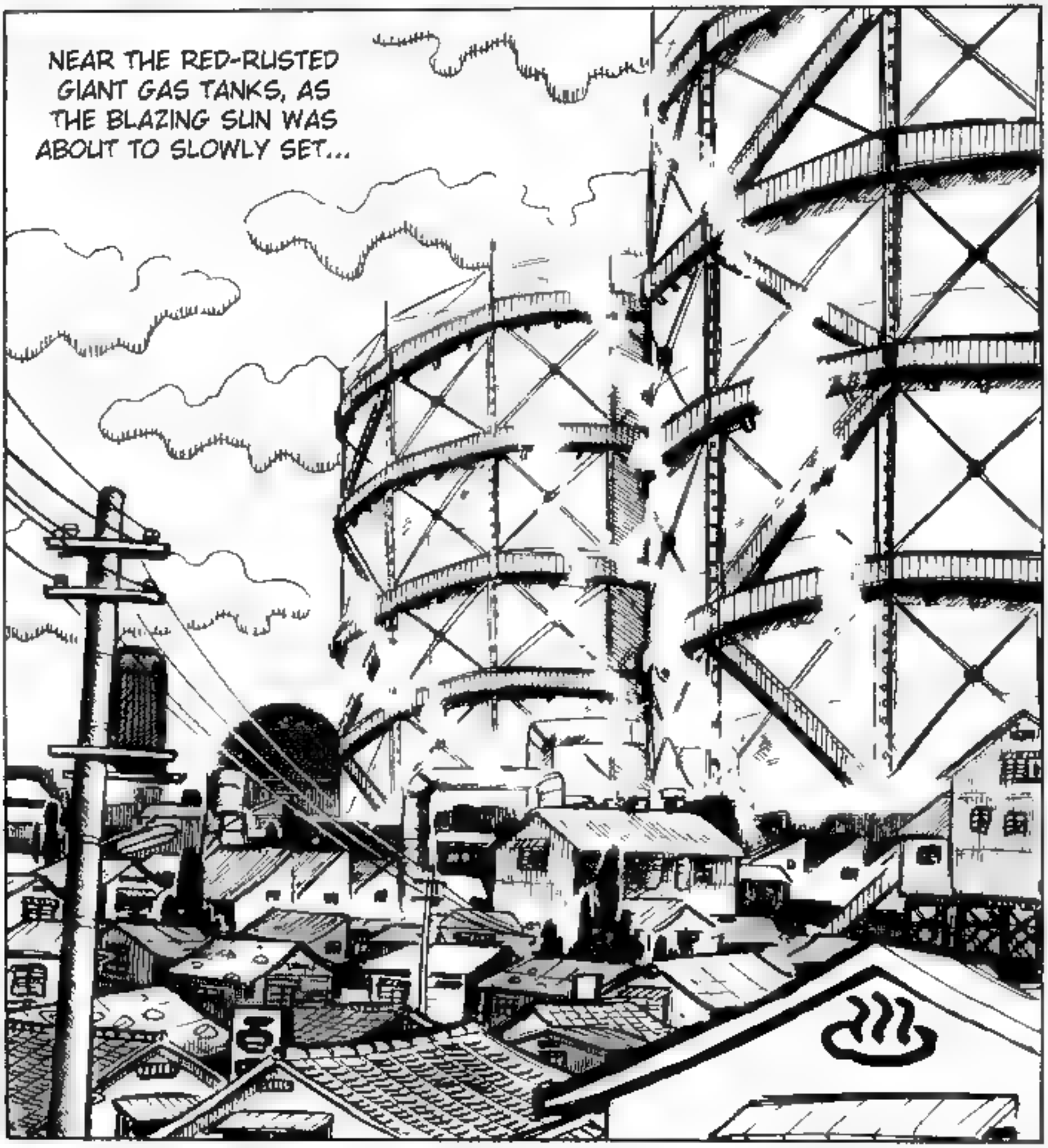
HUFF

HUFF

ASIA BOXING CLUB

OUTSIDERS FORBIDDEN FROM ENTRY. ALL REQUESTS FOR INTERVIEWS SHALL BE DENIED.

AND SO THE DAY OF THE FIGHT APPROACHED CLOSER AND CLOSER...


NEAR THE RED-RUSTED GIANT GAS TANKS, AS THE BLAZING SUN WAS ABOUT TO SLOWLY SET...

TO THESE SLUMS HIDDEN IN THE DIRTY CORNERS OF TOKYO.
AFTER ANOTHER TIRING DAY OF WORK, THE PEOPLE TRUDGED BACK ON WEARY STEPS,
古着
家食堂
おしる
めし
大福亭

WHETHER DRINKING OR EATING, THE PEOPLE WERE BUSY TALKING ABOUT THE UPCOMING FIGHT BETWEEN WOLF AND JOE.

IT WAS AS IF THE PEOPLE OF THIS NEIGHBOURHOOD HAD THEIR OWN PERSONAL HOPES AND DREAMS STAKED ON THE SUCCESS OF THEIR NEIGHBOUR AND FRIEND, YABUKI JOE.

AND DRUNKARDS QUITTING DRINKING JUST TO SAVE UP ENOUGH MONEY TO BUY BOXING TICKETS

CHEAPSKATES BUYING PROPER PANTS TO WEAR FOR WHEN THEY WOULD GO SEE JOE'S MATCHES,

THERE WERE ILLITERATES BUYING NEWSPAPERS FOR THE FIRST TIME IN THEIR LIVES JUST BECAUSE AN ARTICLE ABOUT JOE WAS IN THEM,

BUT UNLIKE THE EXCITED TOWNSPEOPLE..

丹下拳闘クラブ

AND LIKE A MINDLESS DOLL, HE WOULD DO SOME JUMPING ROPES, PUNCH THE PUNCHING BALL, AND HIT THE SANDBAG.

MEANWHILE, JOE HAD AN ICE-COLD GAZE,

WERE STANDING ON PINS AND NEEDLES.

AND EVERY NOW AND THEN, HE WOULD GET UP AS IF HE HAD THOUGHT UP SOME IDEA.

AND NISHI,
TANGE DANPEI,

キン
ユ
ン

THE REPORTERS TOO, WERE STARING BLANKLY OFF INTO THE SPACE AND KILLING TIME.

IF YOU KEEP MAKING JOE DO ONLY BASIC DRILLS, HE'S NOT GOING TO BE ABLE TO BEAT WOLF.

THE WORD AROUND TOWN IS THAT WOLF IS UNDERGOING SOME SPECIAL TRAINING TO BEAT JOE'S TRADEMARK CROSS-COUNTERS.

HOW LONG ARE YOU PLANNING TO HAVE JOE JUST HIT THE SANDBAGS AND DO JUMPING ROPES?

MR. TANGE,

YOU AND YOUR PLANS! HOW THE HELL ARE WE SUPPOSED TO COME UP WITH A SECRET PLAN IF WE DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT THE OTHER SIDE'S PLAN IS?

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YEAH, MAYBE THEN WE'D BE ABLE TO WRITE SOME-THING FOR ONCE

YEAH, PRACTICE SOMETHING COOL LIKE A 3-HIT CROSS COUNTER OR SOMETHING ..

YEAH, SHOULDN'T YOU GUYS ALSO BE COMING UP WITH SOME SORT OF A PLAN?

EVEN THOUGH THE PEOPLE OVER AT ASIA BOXING CLUB ARE ALL HELPING WOLF WITH HIS STRATEGY TO COUNTER JOE,

AGH, JEEZE... LOOKS LIKE THE TANGE GYM MEMBERS ARE IN FULL-HYSTERIA MODE...

THE PEOPLE HERE AT TANGE GYM CAN'T EVEN COME UP WITH A PLAN, MUCH LESS A SINGLE "P"... NO WONDER THEY SEEM NERVOUS.

COULD YOU REPORTERS STOP BOTHERING US IN OUR GYM FOR ONCE?

JUST LEAVE US ALONE ALREADY!

YOU THINK THAT BROTHER JOE WILL ACTUALLY LOSE TO THAT WOLF?

WHAT KINDA NONSENSE ARE YOU HUFFIN' ABOUT!?

OWW!

WILL MOST LIKELY BECOME PREY TO THE BIG BAD WOLF...

AT THIS RATE, IT SEEMS EVEN BRAWLER JOE,

AGHHH!

HAVE A TASTE OF THIS, YOU IDIOT REPORTERS!

H-HEY, STOP THAT!

OW!

YOU GUYS GOT ENOUGH MONEY FOR PUBLIC TRANSIT, RIGHT?

JUST SHUT YOUR TRAP AND FOLLOW ME

WHERE YA HEADED, TARO?

WHA. .

IF YOU'VE GOT THE TIME TO BE THROWING ROCKS, THEN COME WITH ME!

QUIT IT.

TARO WANTS US TO FOLLOW HIM.

MONEY?

ARE YOU KIDDING? THERE'S NO WAY WE'D HAVE ANY MONEY ON US.

I DON'T HAVE A CENT ON ME EITHER!

WELL THEN GO GET SOME FROM PEOPLE WHO LOOK LIKE THEY'VE GOT CHANGE.

I'LL TAKE YOU SOME-PLACE COOL.

PERVERT!

DON'T YOU KNOW YOU'RE IN THE PRESENCE OF A LADY!?

WELL I HAVE SOME FAMILY JEWELS THAT MIGHT BE WORTH SOMETHING

AGHH...!

ALRIGHT, LET'S GO BUM SOME MONEY OFF OF THOSE REPORTERS

SOMEPLACE COOL?

OWW... M-MY BODY...

AND I GOT ENOUGH MONEY FOR A CAB!

HEH HEH, THEY EVEN GAVE ME THEIR CAMERA!

ALRIGHT, I'VE GOT ENOUGH MONEY TO TAKE A TRAIN.

GREAT, THEN LET'S TAKE A TAXI!

I'M BEING ROBBED!

H-HELP!

WE'RE SORRY SO PLEASE JUST STOP!

L-LET GO!

DROP US OFF HERE.

THIS SHOULD BE FINE.

ISN'T THIS ASIA BOXING CLUB?

WHAT?

WHAT'RE WE GONNA DO HERE?

SHH! JUST KEEP QUIET FOR NOW.

AFTER ME.

ASIA BOXING CLUB

COULD WE PLEASE JUST GET A QUICK PEEK?

I'M BEGGING YOU, JUST ONE INTERVIEW!

I SWEAR I WON'T DISTURB THEIR TRAINING.

I SWEAR I'LL BE REAL QUICK

IF NOT WOLF, CAN'T WE AT LEAST ASK A FEW QUESTIONS TO MR. OOTAKA?

OH COME ON, DON'T BE LIKE THAT...

SO IF YOU GOT THAT, GO HOME!

CLUB OWNER OOTAKA HAS STRICTLY ORDERED US TO NOT LET ANYBODY OR ANYTHING INSIDE UNTIL WOLF'S UPCOMING MATCH.

READ THE SIGN, PAL

OUTSIDERS FORBIDDEN FROM ENTRY ALL REQUESTS FOR INTERVIE SHALL BE DENIE

WE'LL HEAD HOME ALRIGHT, YESSIREE BOB.

O-OKAY, WE GOT IT, WE GOT IT

B-BYE THEN.

じっ

QUIET!

STOP IT...

IDIOT! PERVERT!

YEAH, YOU'RE SUCH A DUMBHEAD!

JEEZ, YOU'RE DENSE...

SO WHAT'RE WE GOING TO DO HERE?

WE'VE OBVIOUSLY COME HERE TO SPY ON WOLF'S SECRET TRAINING TO HELP BROTHER JOE.

SINCE WE CAN'T ENTER FROM THE FRONT DOORS,

LET'S TRY THE BACK DOOR.

LOOKS LIKE SECURITY'S TIGHTER THAN I THOUGHT.

THEY'VE GOT TOUGH-LOOKING GUARDS ON ALL SIDES...

HM.

WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO GET INSIDE USING THIS DUST CHUTE.

ALRIGHT, LET'S GO IN THROUGH HERE.

THE TOUGHER IT IS TO GET IN, THE MORE I WANT TO FIND OUT WHAT THEY'RE HIDING. THAT'S JUST THE WAY HUMANS WORK..

ME TOO.

I'LL GO TOO.

AND ME!

BUT I'D DO ANYTHING IF IT'S FOR BROTHER JOE.

YOU DON'T HAVE TO IF YOU DON'T WANT TO.

WE HAVE TO CRAWL THROUGH GARBAGE...!?

HMM...

I THOUGHT WE WERE GOING TO SOME-PLACE COOL, NOT A DUMPSTER...

YUCK! THAT STINKS!

ゴソ・・ゴソ・・

BE QUIET, YOU IDIOTS!

IT LOOKED LIKE A PRETTY WORN OUT BUILDING FROM THE OUTSIDE,

BUT IT LOOKS REAL NICE ON THE INSIDE

ロッカールーム

TRUE

THIS GYM'S PRODUCED TWO WORLD CHAMPIONS. IT'S NOT SURPRISING THAT THEY'D HAVE THE MONEY FOR A HIGH-CLASS FACILITY

NO, I HEARD THAT WOLF'S BEEN FEVERISHLY TRAINING LATE INTO THE NIGHT TOO.

HE COULD BE DONE FOR THE DAY AND BE TAKING A REST.

BUT I WONDER IF HE'D BE TRAINING THIS LATE INTO THE NIGHT?

I THINK THE REPORTERS SAID,

THAT WOLF WAS DOING HIS SECRET TRAINING UP ON THE 3RD FLOOR...

THE LIGHTS ARE STILL ON HERE.

D-DON'T SCARE US.

BE SURE TO KEEP YOUR MOUTHS SHUT. WHO KNOWS WHAT MIGHT HAPPEN TO US IF WE'RE FOUND OUT.

THIS IS IT...

MAMMOTH NISHI WOULD BE SO JEALOUS IF HE SAW THIS.

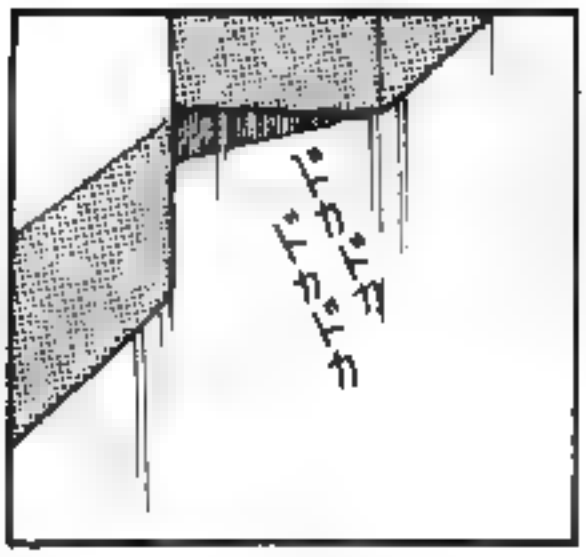
WHOA, THEY EVEN HAVE A SAUNA ROOM TO HELP WITH THE R WEIGHT CONTROL

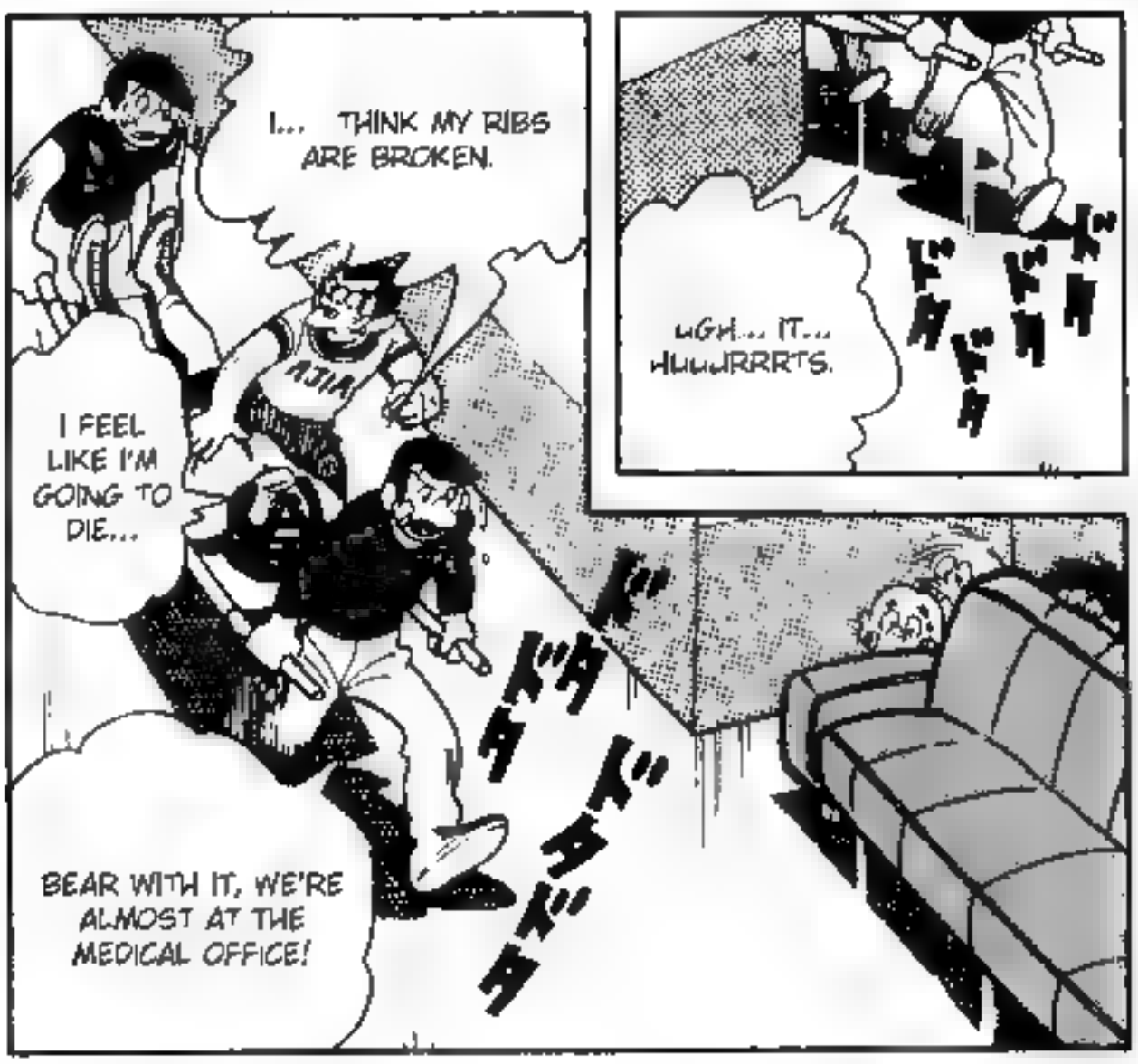
SHH!

FART

LET'S GO.

THEY'VE GOT A MEDICAL OFFICE TOO. ISN'T THIS PLACE FANCY...




I... THINK MY RIBS ARE BROKEN.
I FEEL LIKE I'M GOING TO DIE...
BEAR WITH IT, WE'RE ALMOST AT THE MEDICAL OFFICE!
ドドド

ENOUGH WITH THE QUES-TIONS AND JUST TREAT HIM ALREADY, PLEASE!

JUST WHAT KIND OF TRAINING ARE YOU PEOPLE DOING?

ANOTHER PATIENT? ISN'T THIS THE 3RD ONE TODAY ALONE?

D-DOCTOR, WE'VE GOT ANOTHER ONE!

AGHHH!

STOP MOVING SO MUCH OR YOU'LL BLEED EVEN WORSE!

AT THIS RATE, I'LL RUN OUT OF BEDS FOR THE PATIENTS!

WHAT? I SHOULD PREPARE TO RECEIVE ANOTHER INJURED PATIENT SOON?

Y YEAH.

DID YOU .. SEE HIM...?

STAY STILL!

GAHHHH! IT HURTS! IT HURTS!

HE WAS INJURED FROM SPARRING WITH WOLF

IT MUST'VE BEEN WOLF'S DOING

AHHHHH!

AGHH!

GET HIM ON THE BED RIGHT AWAY!

ANOTHER PATIENT COMING THROUGH!

QUICKLY!

O-OK !

LET'S GO TO THE TRAINING ROOM!

WE'RE NOT GONNA GET ANYWHERE BY H DING HERE ALL DAY.

YEAH AND THINK HIS RIGHT ARM WAS BROKEN TOO

KINOKO, LOOK! THAT GUY HAD A DISLOCATED JAW...!

T-THERE'S B-B-BLOOD EVERY-WHERE

THAT MUST BE THE ROOM

GAHHH!

UGH!

I'LL TRY TO PEEP THROUGH THIS KEYHOLE

I CAN'T SEE ANY-THING.

W-WHAT'S THAT?

J-JUST LISTEN TO ALL THAT NOISE

OOF!

KEEP WATCH AND TELL ME RIGHT AWAY IF YOU SEE ANYONE COMING!

GYAAA!

ELBOW! USE THE ELBOW!

NO, STEP IN DEEPER!

FINISH IT OFF IN ONE BLOW!

THAT'S IT, WOLF!

I'LL TRY TO MOVE HIM AWAY WITH MY SNORTS.

STOP SHOVING! YOU CAN'T SEE ANYTHING ANYWAYS

AND I'LL TRY TO TAKE A PICTURE WITH MY CAMERA.

THAT'S ONE BIG BUTT HE'S GOT

DAMMIT! THAT OOTAKA DUDE'S BLOCKING MY VIEW!

LET ME TRY!

AH...!

SEEMS WE HAVE SOME RATS WHO SNUCK IN!

STOP THE TRAINING, WOLF!

OWW...

WHA?

AHH!

OH NO!

WHAT?

LET US OUT!

YOU THINK YOU CAN JUST SNEAK IN HERE WITHOUT PERMISSION AND THEN LEAVE WITHOUT EVEN SAYING HE...O OR GOODBYE?

NOT SO FAST

ガチッ!

RUN FOR IT, GUYS!

CRAP!

OH? THESE KIDS ARE JOE'S FRIENDS, ARE THEY NOW?

HOW'D THEY EVEN SNEAK IN HERE IN THE FIRST PLACE!?

HMM... I THINK THESE KIDS ARE WITH YABUKI JOE..

MOVE ASIDE FOR A SEC.

OH NO...

THIS ONE'S EVEN BROUGHT A CAMERA WITH HIM!

YEAH! WE DID IT OUT OF OUR OWN CHOICE BECAUSE WE WANTED TO!

YOU'RE WRONG! BROTHER JOE WASN'T THE ONE WHO TOLD US TO DO THIS!

TO THINK HE WOULD SEND LITTLE KIDS TO SPY ON ME...

HAHAHA, THAT YABUKI JOE'S DIRTIER THAN I THOUGHT

T-TARO!

AHH!

I WANT MY MOMMY!

IT STILL DOESN'T CHANGE THE FACT THAT YOU BRATS CAME INTO A PLACE YOU WEREN'T SUPPOSED TO.

HEH, I DON'T GIVE A RAT'S TAIL ABOUT THAT.

3.5 inning

丹下拳
ギィ…
I SLEPT SO MUCH MY HEAD HURTS.
HEH
WHAT ABOUT YOU? DID YOU GET ANY SLEEP?
LOOKS LIKE YOU DIDN'T GET ANY SLEEP, OLD MAN.
WELL LET ME TELL YOU THAT HASN'T BEEN ON MY MIND AT ALL!
WHAT DID YOU SAY!? YOU THINK I LOST SLEEP OVER WORRYING ABOUT WOLF'S SECRET PLAN OR SOMETHING!?
SOME REAL GOOD SLEEP YOU MUST'VE GOTTEN WITH ALL THAT TWISTING AND TURNING YOU DID IN BED.
SURE YOU DID.
THE HELL ARE YOU TELLING ME THAT FOR!?
HMPH!
I REALLY DIDN'T GET ANY SLEEP,
STOP YELLING SO EARLY IN THE MORNING.
AND MY NERVES ARE SHOT TO HELL.

AND I'M REAL DIS-APPOINTED IN YOU TOO, OLD MAN!

I'M REAL DISAPPOINTED IN TANGE GYM!

YOU KNOW, I REALLY HAVE TO CONFESS TO YOU ONE THING

EVEN AFTER EVERYTHING I SAID, YOU'RE STILL SO PANICKED ABOUT ONE MANGY MUTT

WHAT!?

THAT I SHOULD'VE JUST JOINED SHIRAKI GYM WHEN THEY OFFERED ME!

SOMETIMES I GET THE FEELING

YOU KNOW,

HAS THERE BEEN A SINGLE COACH-LIKE THING YOU'VE DONE FOR ME EVER SINCE I ACCEPTED WOLF'S CHALLENGE?

I MEAN,

YOU CAN'T EVEN ACT LIKE A PROPER COACH OR SECOND, LET ALONE A CLUB OWNER

CLUB OWNER TANGE, MY ASS!

YOUR NERVOUS LOOKS HAVE EVEN GOTTEN NISHI PANICK-ING!

I DON'T CARE IF YOU DON'T DO ANYTHING ELSE BUT WATCH ME JUST HAVE SOME MORE CONFI-DENCE IN ME AS YOU LOOK AT ME!

BUT AT THE VERY LEAST, COULD YOU STOP LOOKING SO NERVOUS AROUND ME?

WELL, SINCE THIS IS A FIGHT THAT I ACCEPTED ALL ON MY OWN, I WASN'T EXACTLY PLANNING TO RELY ON YOUR COACHING TO HELP ME GET THROUGH THIS BUT

LET ME SAY THIS ONE MORE TIME...

I CAN'T EVEN GET THE URGE TO HIT THE SANDBAG WHEN I LOOK AT YOU!

YOUR PALE LOOKS IS JUST ABOUT ENOUGH TO DRIVE EVEN ME INSANE.

THAT WOULD ACTUALLY HELP ME OUT WITH MY TRAINING MORE THAN WHAT YOU'RE DOING RIGHT NOW!

THERE'S NOT A CHANCE IN HELL THAT I'D LOSE TO HIM SO JUST RELAX AND GO DO YOUR DAY JOBS OR SOMETHING!

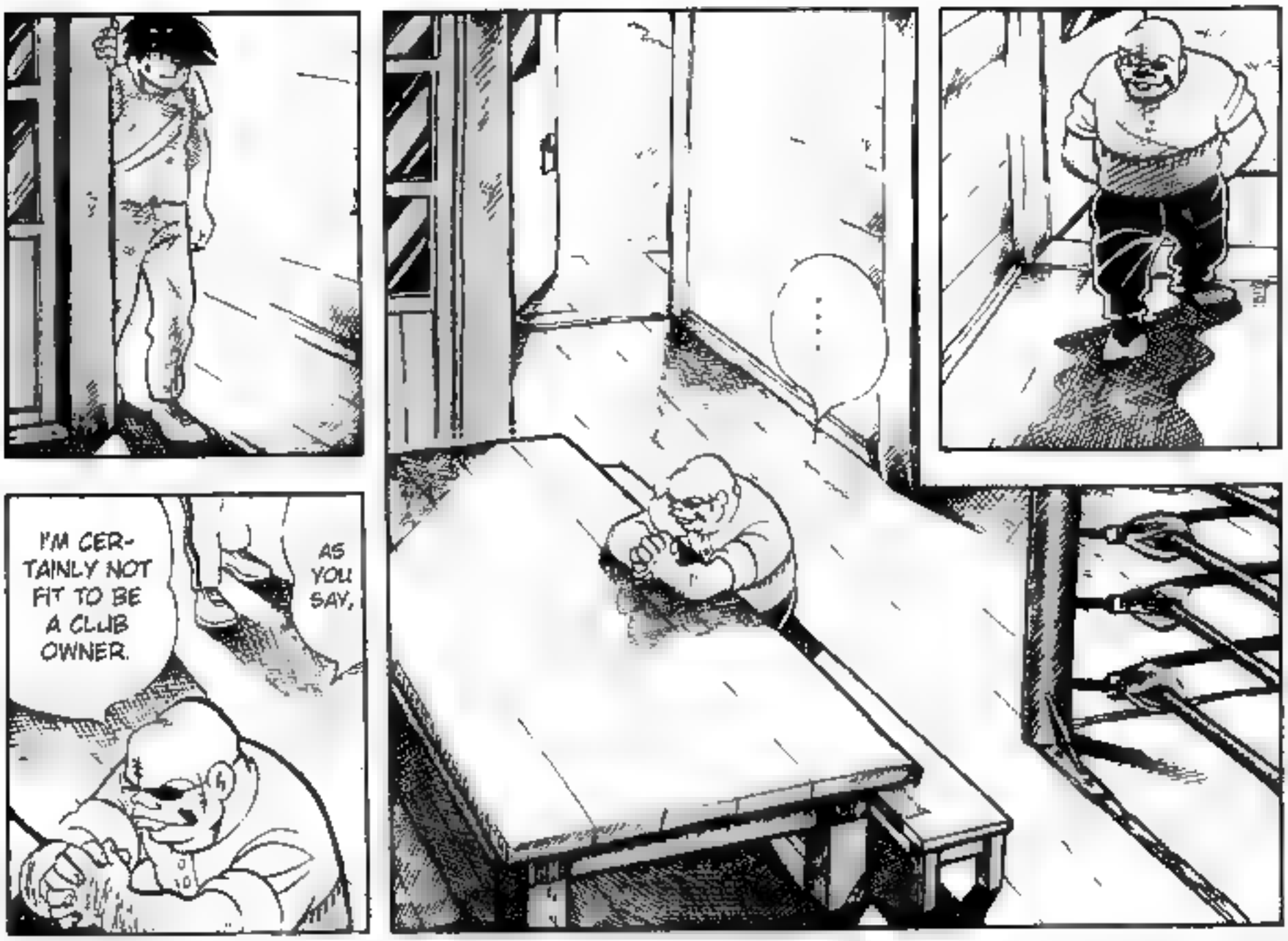
THAT WOLF DOESN'T SCARE ME A SINGLE BIT!

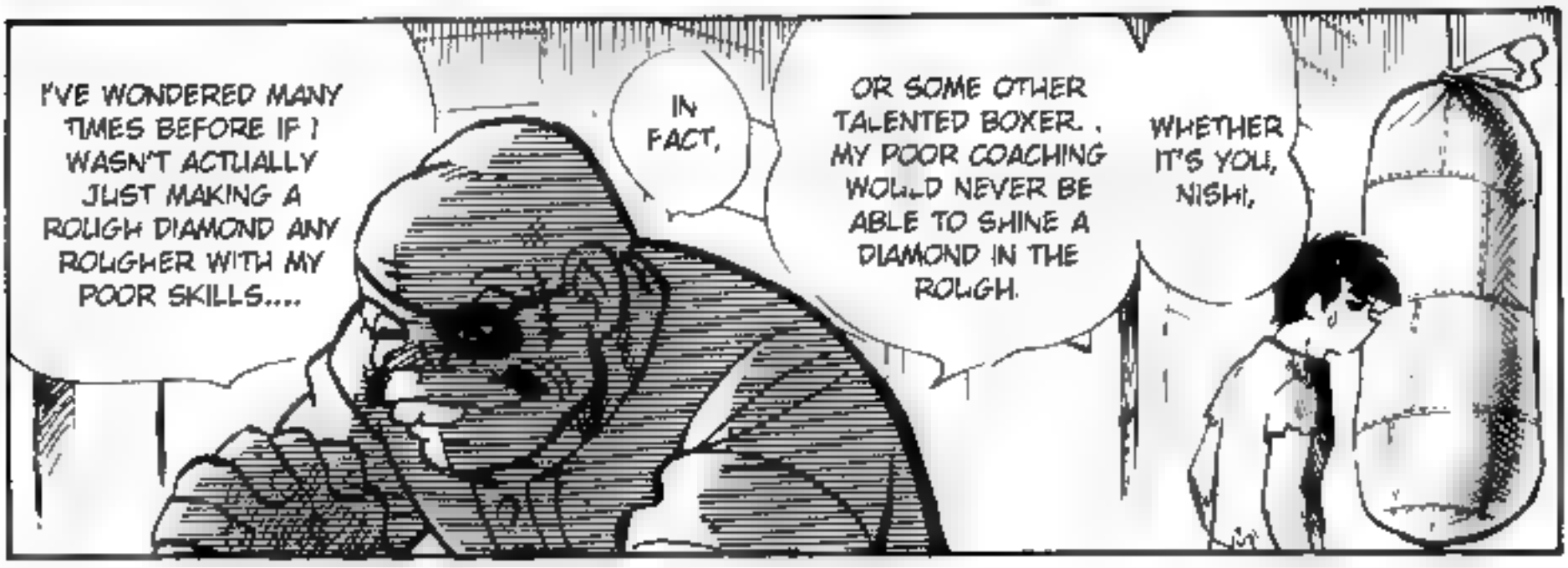
I HEAR YOU LOUD AND CLEAR.

YOU SAY SOME PRETTY BIG WORDS.

I DON'T HAVE ANY FITTING REPLIES.

BUT AS EMBARRASSING AS IT IS TO ADMIT,


I'M CER-TAINLY NOT FIT TO BE A CLUB OWNER.
AS YOU SAY,
....


I'VE WONDERED MANY TIMES BEFORE IF I WASN'T ACTUALLY JUST MAKING A ROUGH DIAMOND ANY ROUGHER WITH MY POOR SKILLS....
IN FACT,
OR SOME OTHER TALENTED BOXER. . MY POOR COACHING WOULD NEVER BE ABLE TO SHINE A DIAMOND IN THE ROUGH.
WHETHER IT'S YOU, NISHI,

I'M SORRY
BUT IN TERMS OF THE INTENSITY AND HEART I'VE POURED OVER TRAINING YOU AND NISHI, I DON'T THINK I'D LOSE TO ANYONE ELSE.
I MAY LOOK LIKE NOTHING BUT A LOUSY BOXING CLUB OWNER TO YOU,

I THINK I'M TRYING AS HARD AS I CAN.
BUT YOU KNOW...

I'VE SAID SOMETHING TRULY REGRETTABLE

MY HEAD'S NOT QUITE NORMAL RIGHT NOW.

I WENT OVER THE LINE.

I'M SORRY, OLD MAN.

THERE'S NO NEED FOR YOU TO APOLOGIZE

SO PLEASE STOP TALKING THAT WAY.

I'LL GO PERSONALLY ASK MR. SHIRAKI TO TAKE YOU IN.

WHY DON'T YOU PREPARE FOR YOUR MATCH AGAINST WOLF AT SHIRAK GYM INSTEAD?

BUT IT'S NOT TOO LATE.

BUT YOU AND NISHI REALLY MIGHT ONLY BE RUINING YOUR FUTURE BY STAYING WITH ME.

THIS MIGHT SOUND LIKE LOSER-TALK TO YOU,

AFTER THOSE BIG WORDS, WHAT'RE YOU CHICKENING OUT NOW FOR...?

HA HA HA

JUST FORGET ABOUT WHAT I SAID A MINUTE AGO..

SO PLEASE,

STOP. I ALREADY APOLOGIZED, DIDN'T I?

I WOULD'VE LEFT THIS DUMP LONG AGO ALREADY!

IF I REALLY THOUGHT YOU WERE LOUSY THEN I WOULDN'T EVEN BE APOLOGIZING!

IT'S STILL NOT TOO LATE FOR YOU TO START OV-

YOU DON'T NEED TO WORRY ABOUT ME

I SAID THAT'S ENOUGH!

ALRIGHT, ALRIGHT. I UNDERSTAND SO I'LL STOP.

SO . WHAT DO YOU THINK WOLF'S SECRET PLAN IS,

OLD MAN?

WITH YOUR FIGHT APPROACHING, WE REALLY HAVE TO COME UP WITH SOME SORT OF PLAN TO COUNTER WOLF'S SECRET PLAN...

MORE IMPORTANTLY,

WHICH IS WHY I'M WONDERING WHETHER OR NOT I SHOULD TRY FIGHTING WITHOUT RESORTING TO MY CROSS COUNTERS.

YEAH, I GET THAT FEELING TOO,

BLOCK IT, HUH

THAT'S WHERE HIS NEWFOUND CONFIDENCE IS FROM.

HE MUST'VE FOUND SOME WAY TO BLOCK YOUR TRADE-MARK CROSS-COUNTER.

I'M SURE YOU ALREADY HAVE A GOOD IDEA YOURSELF BUT I GET THE FEELING THAT...

WAIT A SECOND... SINCE A CROSS COUNTER IS NORMALLY EXECUTED WHEN THE OPPONENT LEANS IN WITH A POWERFUL LEFT STRAIGHT ..

YOU, TOO, OLD MAN?

WHA?

YOU THOUGHT SO TOO?

Y-YOU

WHA?

YOU'RE AN EXCEL-LENT TRAINER.

YOU'RE DEFINITELY NOT A LOUSY CLUB OWNER IF YOU'VE REALIZED THIS MUCH.

HAHA, LOOKS LIKE WE HAD THE SAME IDEA ALL ALONG.

SO IF THE OPPONENT DECIDES TO NEVER USE A LEFT STRAIGHT...

HA, INSULT ME ONE SECOND AND KISS MY FEET THE NEXT?

HAHAHA HAHAHA!

A PLAN WHERE HE NEVER USES A LEFT STRAIGHT...?

W-WAIT A MINUTE..

WHEW, I WAS WORRIED THOSE TWO WERE GOING TO SPLIT UP FOR GOOD

T-THIS IS NO ORDINARY MATTER...!

-IF WOLF REALLY DOESN'T USE HIS LEFT STRAIGHT AT ALL, THEN...

YOU'LL JUST HAVE TO DUKE IT OUT WITH REGULAR PUNCHES...

THIS WOULD ALSO MEAN THAT YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO USE YOUR ONLY REAL EFFECTIVE WEAPON.

HAHA... TAKE AWAY A FIGHTER'S ONLY WEAPON AND YOU'RE LEFT WITH ONLY AN IDIOT...

YOU UP FOR A SPAR WITH ME?

HEY, OH, SO YOU'RE UP, ARE YOU?

C'MON, BE MY PARTNER.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN WHY? I CAN'T JUST SIT ON MY ASS FOREVER AS TALENTED AS I AM, YOU KNOW.

HUH?

WHY?

YOU WANT TO SPAR?

THAT'S NOT IT..

NO,

DON'T FEEL LIKE FIGHTING RIGHT AFTER WAKING UP?

WHAT'S WRONG!?

HA HA HA

O-OK.

JUST SPAR WITH HIM, NISHI.

TRY TO HIT ME AS MUCH AS YOU WANT!

AND DON'T WORRY ABOUT INJURING ME JUST BECAUSE MY FIGHT'S CLOSE AT HAND.

COME AT ME.

AHH!

ARE YOU STILL TRYING TO PRACTICE YOUR CROSS COUNTERS?

J=JOE, WHAT'S WITH THAT STANCE...?

AND JUST COME AT ME!

SO STOP WORRY-ING,

HA, AS IF I'D USE ONE OF MY CROSS COUNTERS AGAINST YOU WHEN YOU BARELY HAVE THE STRENGTH TO STAND FROM ALL THAT WEIGHT LOSS!

I... I'D RATHER NOT TAKE ONE OF YOUR CROSS COUNTERS IF POSSIBLE...

I'LL BE USING MY LEFT STRAIGHTS.

NO,

RENDERING THAT NO-GUARD STANCE OF YOURS USELESS?

DIDN'T I *JUST* SAY TO YOU HOW WOLF WON'T PUNCH A LEFT STRAIGHT,

JUST WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU THINKING!?

STOP IT, JOE!

WHAT...?

WE HAVE TO COME UP WITH ANOTHER PLAN!

AH!

WHA!?

AH!

W-WOLF...

QUITE ADMIRABLE OF YOU.

WELL, WELL. AREN'T YOU TRAINING HARD THIS EARLY IN THE MORNING?

PATH-ETIC.

JUST LOOK AT ALL THIS DUST...

BUT WHAT KIND OF RUN-DOWN OLD GYM IS THIS?

I'M IMPRESSED YOU CAN EVEN PRACTICE IN THIS DUMP.

THE HELL DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING HERE ANYWAYS!?

WELL AREN'T YOU CARING!?

THEY'RE IN MY CAR.

SPIES?

TO GIVE YOU BACK YOUR CUTE LITTLE SPIES, OF COURSE.

WHAT AM I DOING HERE?

AHH!

AHH!

ONE

HEH HEH HEH

TWO, THREE,

DON'T WORRY, THEY'VE ONLY LOST A BIT OF CONSCIOUSNESS.

FOUR, FIVE!

T-THE KIDS!

LET'S SAVE THE FIST FIGHT FOR THE RING.

NOW, NOW.

HOW DARE YOU BEAT UP A COUPLE OF KIDS, YOU BASTARD!

ARE YOU ALRIGHT!?

SACHI! KINOKO!

HAHA HAHA HAHA!

YEAH BUT UNFORTUNATELY FOR THEM, THE ONLY THING THEY ENDED UP SEEING WAS OOTAKA'S BEHIND!

YOU MEAN, TO PEEP ON YOUR SECRET TRAINING...!?

WHAT?

THOSE 5 BRATS SNUCK INTO ASIA GYM.

LAST NIGHT,

ROTTEN SON OF A BITCH!

YOU...

HOW CRUEL...

Y-YOU USED THESE KIDS AS YOUR SPARRING PARTNER...!?

SO I GAVE THEM A HANDS-ON DEMONSTRATION OF MY MOVES.

BUT OF COURSE, BEING THE NICE GUY I AM, I COULDN'T JUST SAY NO TO KIDS WHO WANTED TO SEE ME PRACTICE SO BADLY.

WAIT!

BYE!

SEE YOU ON THE RING THEN!

SO KEEP WORKING HARD UNTIL THEN!

IT'LL ONLY BE A FEW DAYS LEFT UNTIL OUR FIGHT ANYWAYS.

GET BACK HERE!

I SAID WAIT RIGHT THERE!

AHAHAHA!

NOW, NOW. I TOLD YOU TO SAVE THE FIST FIGHT FOR THE RING, DIDN'T I?

THAT SON OF A...

JOE, NISHI! HURRY UP AND GET THESE KIDS TO A HOSPITAL!

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I'LL GET YOU FOR THIS, WOLF!

COULD YOU STOP TAKING YOUR ANGER OUT ON ME?

J-JOE...

I SWEAR I'LL HAVE MY REVENGE!

FINE, THEN.

ALRIGHT,

UGH!

WHAT ABOUT IT!?

WOLF SAID HE'D BE USING HIS LEFT STRAIGHTS FOR SURE...

DID YOU HEAR?

THIS WILL GO FOR ALL THE PEOPLE IN OUR NEIGHBOURHOOD AS WELL!

AND IT WON'T BE JUST REPORTERS!

FROM NOW ON UNTIL THE MATCH, OUR GYM WILL ALSO IMPOSE RESTRICTED ACCESS LIKE THE ASIA GYM.

RESTRICTED ACCESS

ALL PEOPLE EXCEPT FOR MEMBERS OF THE TANGE GYM ARE FORBIDDEN TO ENTER.

WHA?

NOTHING! NOW GET BACK INSIDE!

W-WHAT'S ALL THIS FOR?

WHAT'S GOING ON?

UNTIL YOUR FIGHT, YOU WON'T BE TAKING ONE STEP OUTSIDE OF THIS GYM!

ESPE-CIALLY YOU, JOE!

LISTEN UP, YOU TWO!

I SAID GET BACK INSIDE!

AGH!

THAT'S RIGHT. AND IT'LL BE THE MOST INTENSE TRAINING AS OF YET! YOU DON'T WANT TO LOSE TO WOLF, RIGHT!?

SPE-CIAL?

JUST WHAT'RE YOU PLANNING?

HUH?

ISN'T THAT OBVIOUS!? IT'S FOR YOUR SPECIAL TRAINING TO PREPARE YOU FOR WOLF!

PUT ON YOUR HEAD GEARS AND GET ON THE RING, YOU TWO!

SO ENOUGH SLACKING AROUND!

I WONDER IF THEY'LL BE ALRIGHT SHUTTING THEMSELVES UP LIKE THAT...

HUH, I WONDER WHAT THEY'RE UP TO...

AGH, JEEZ. NOW EVEN TANGE GYM'S FORBIDDING ANY VISITORS.

ARE THEY DOING SOMETHING IN THERE?

IT'S TOO DARK TO MAKE OUT ANYTHING ..

THE DAY OF THE FIGHT!

FINALLY,

THE ARDUOUS SECRET TRAINING UNDERGONE BY THE TWO FIGHTERS ONLY ADDED FUEL TO THE FIRE, CREATING THE BIGGEST AND MOST ANTICIPATED 6 ROUND MATCH EVER! IT'S A SELLOUT CROWD AT KOURAKUEN HALL WITH SCALPERS SELLING TICKETS TO DESPERATE FANS AND THE POLICE TRYING THEIR BEST TO MAINTAIN ORDER.

THE FATED MATCH BETWEEN WOLF THE TECHNICIAN AND JOE THE BRAWLER!

A FIGHT FOR THE HISTORY BOOKS!

STAY IN YOUR LINES!

DON'T PUSH ME!

I'VE GOT SOME GOOD SEATS, MISTER! ...AT 3 TIMES THE NORMAL PRICE, THOUGH!

GOD, I WISH THEY COULD HAVE HELD THE FIGHT IN A BIGGER VENUE LIKE THE TOKYO METROPOLITAN GYMNASIUM INSTEAD OF CRAMPING ALL OF US HERE IN KOURAKUEN HALL.

I'LL TAKE IT!

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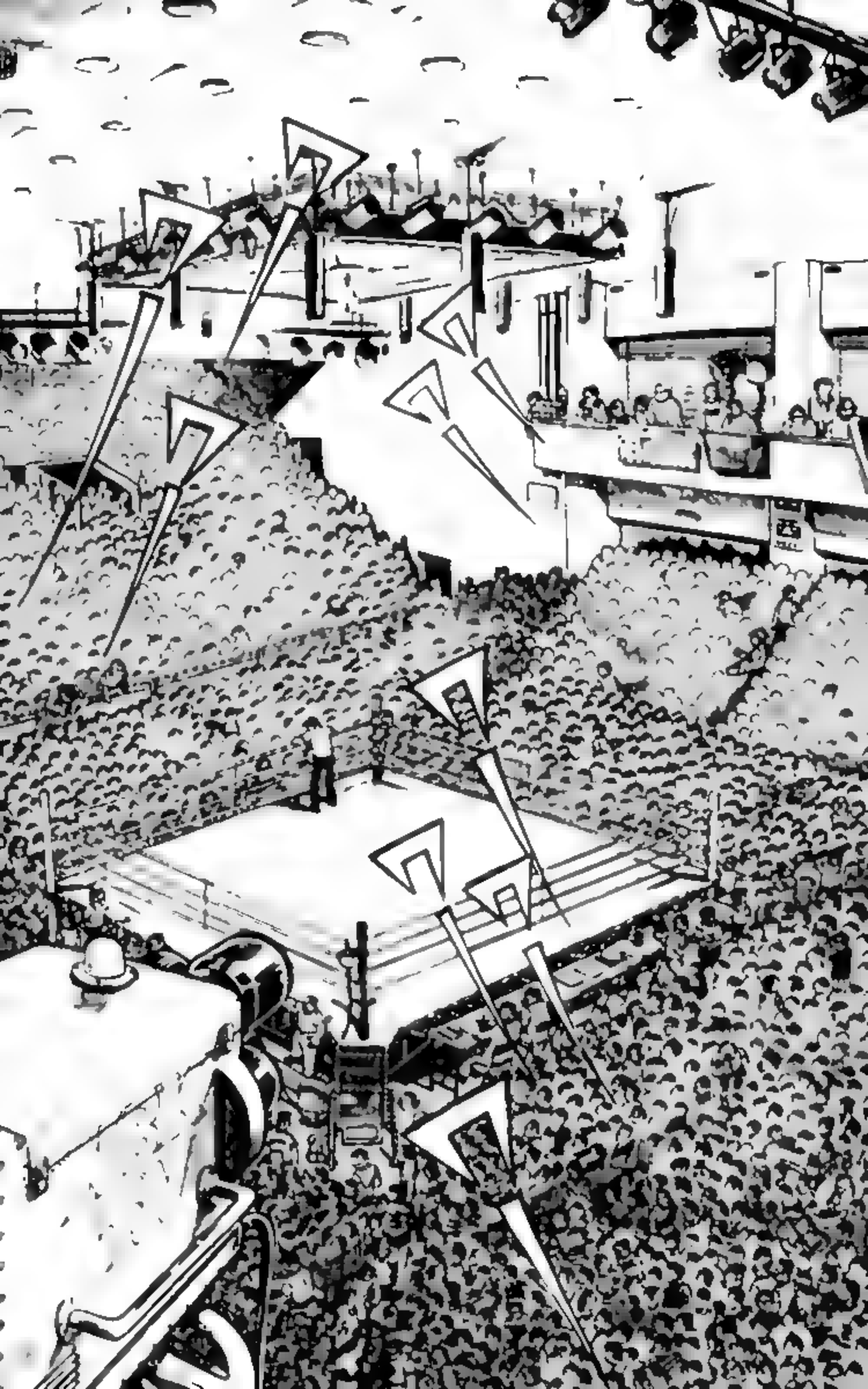
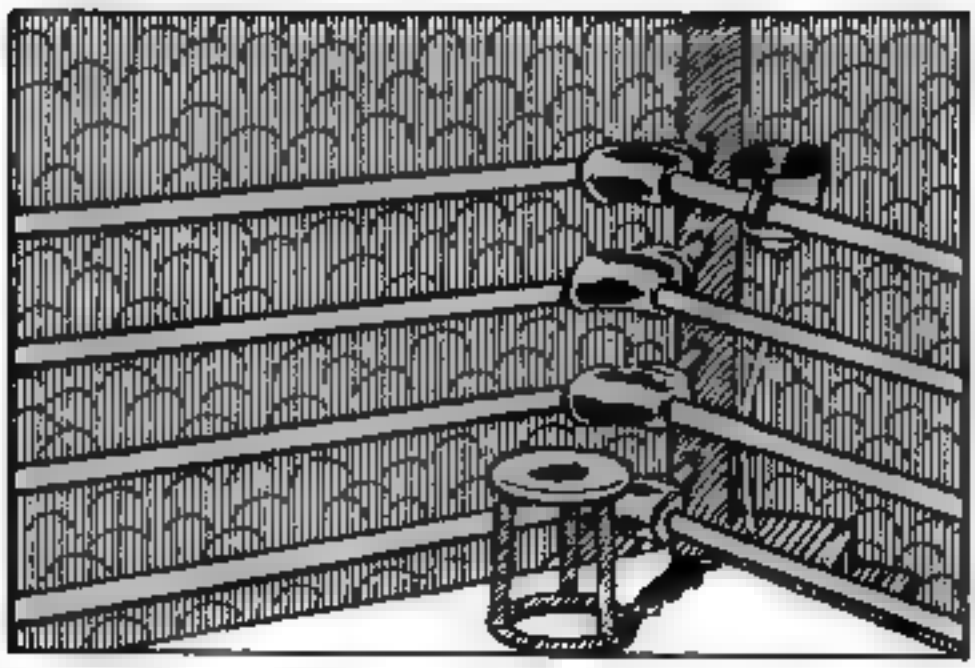
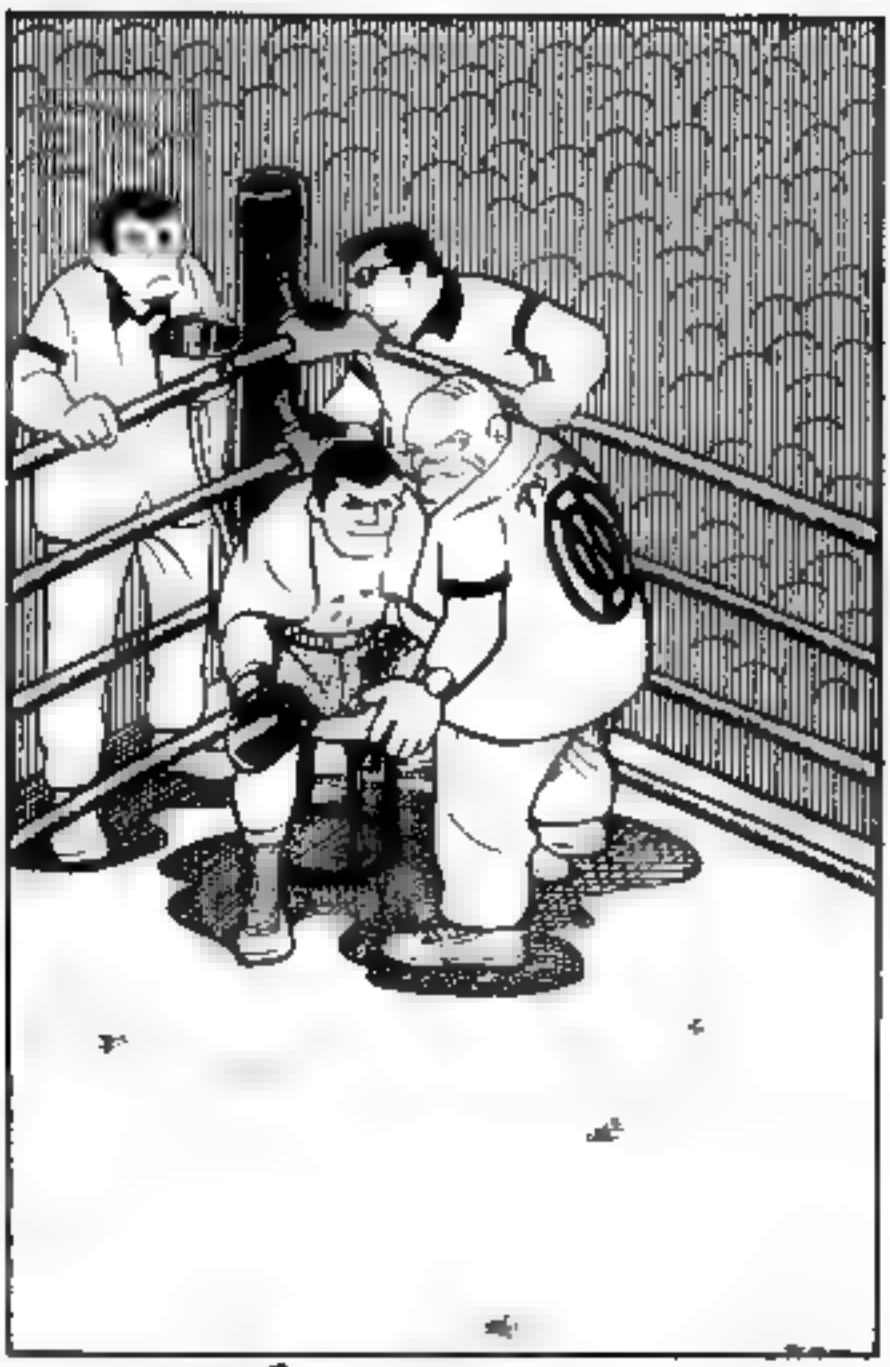






HA
HA
HA
THE FIGHT'S ABOUT TO START AND YABUKI'S STILL NOT HERE?
HM?

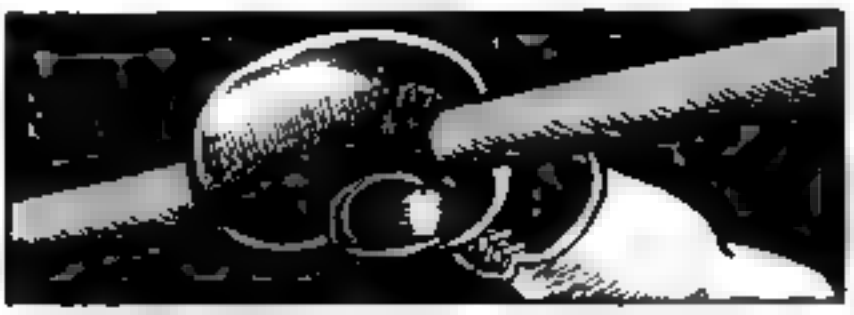
MAYBE HE CHICKENED OUT?
HE'S COMING.
AH.

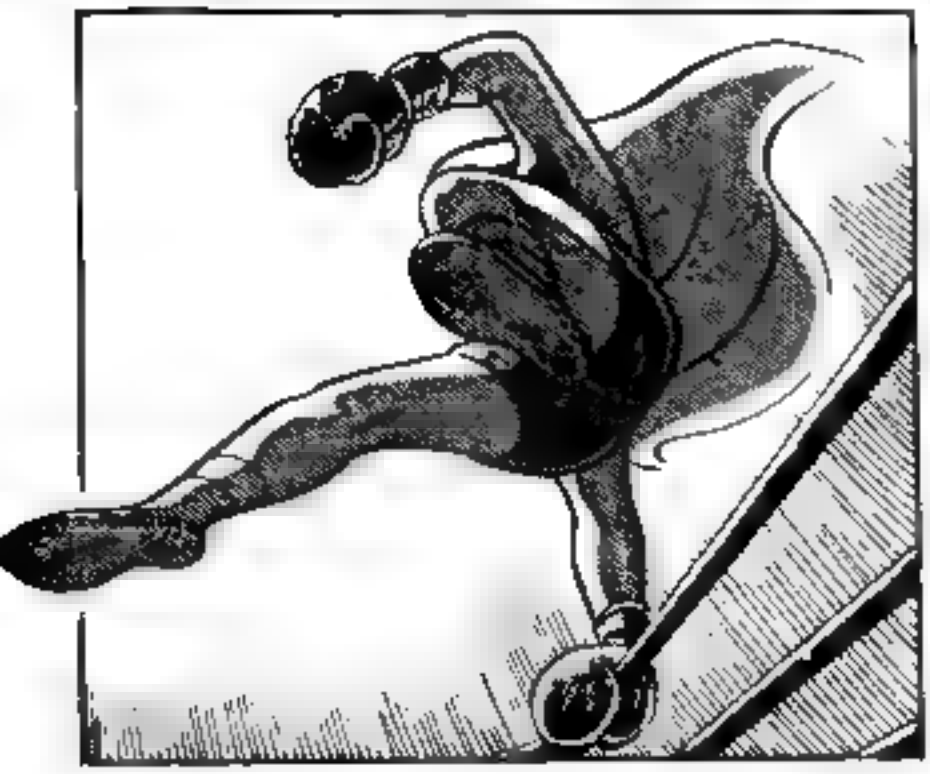
THE MAN-EATING PANTHER OF THE RINGS IS HERE!

WOOHOO! WE'VE BEEN WAITING FOR YA, BRAWLER JOE!

GIVE IT YOUR ALL!

SHOW US YOUR TRADEMARK CROSS-COUNTER AGAIN TONIGHT!





YOU CAN DO IT, JOE!

GO MOP THE FLOOR WITH WOLF!

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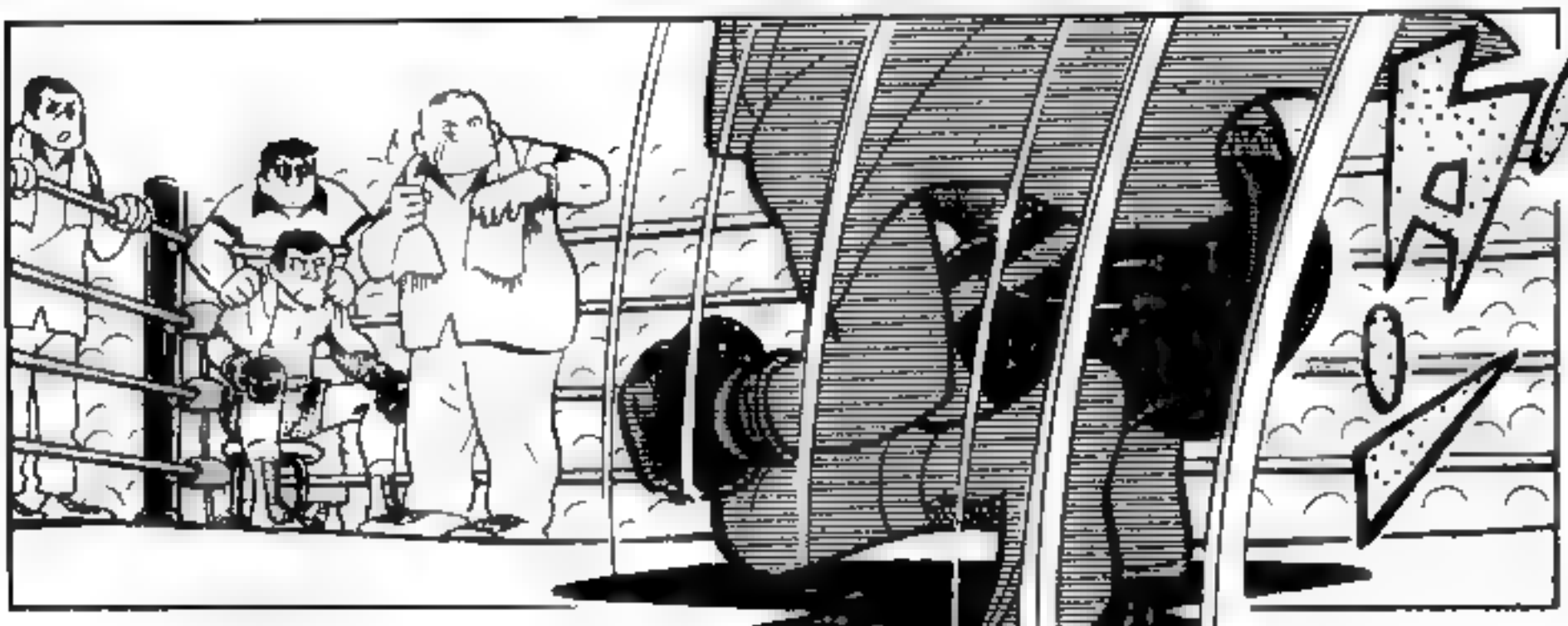


ARE THERE ONLY JOE FANS OUT IN THE CROWD TONIGHT?

W WHOA. JUST LISTEN TO HOW POPULAR HE IS. .

FLASHY AS EVER

WHAT MATTERS ISN'T HOW MUCH THE CROWD CHEERS WHEN YOU GET ON THE RING BUT WHEN YOU GET *OFF THE RING!*

DON'T PAY ANY MIND TO THE CROWD, WOLF.

YOU'RE THE STAR OF TONIGHT!

THAT WAS TOO COOL!

YOU'RE SENDING CHILLS DOWN MY SPINE!

NOW THAT'S WHAT I CAME HERE TO SEE!

AND I HAVE FULL CONFIDENCE THEY'LL BE CHANTING MY NAME WHEN I STEP OUT FROM THE RING TONIGHT!

YES, EXACTLY...

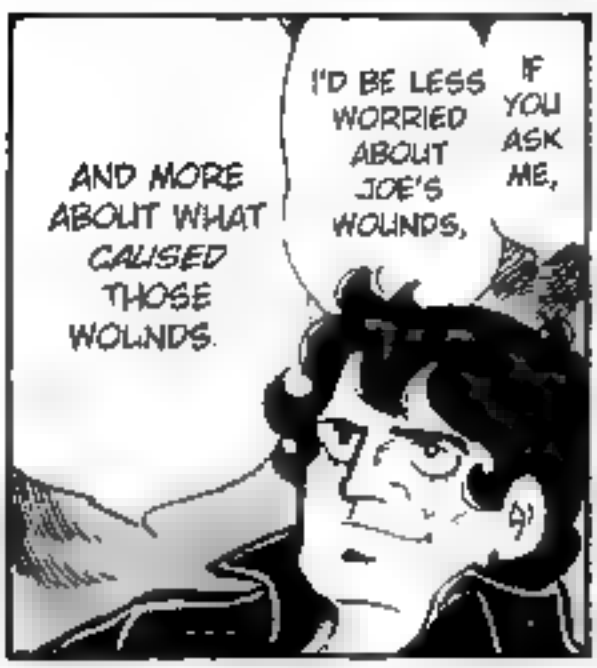
AHH!

AHH!

W-WHAT'S WITH THAT BODY...
AGH!
HE'S COVERED IN BRUISES!
HOLY SH..

WHISPER WHISPER
MURMUR MURMUR
AH..

L-LOOK! IT'S NOT JUST JOE!
CLUB OWNER TANGE AND THE SECOND IS BRUISED ALL OVER TOO!
WHAT'S GOING ON?


AND MORE ABOUT WHAT CAUSED THOSE WOUNDS.
I'D BE LESS WORRIED ABOUT JOE'S WOUNDS,
IF YOU ASK ME,

DO YOU THINK JOE CAN REALLY FIGHT AGAINST WOLF WITH SUCH AN INJURED BODY, RIKIISHI?
W-WHAT HAPPENED TO THOSE 3!?

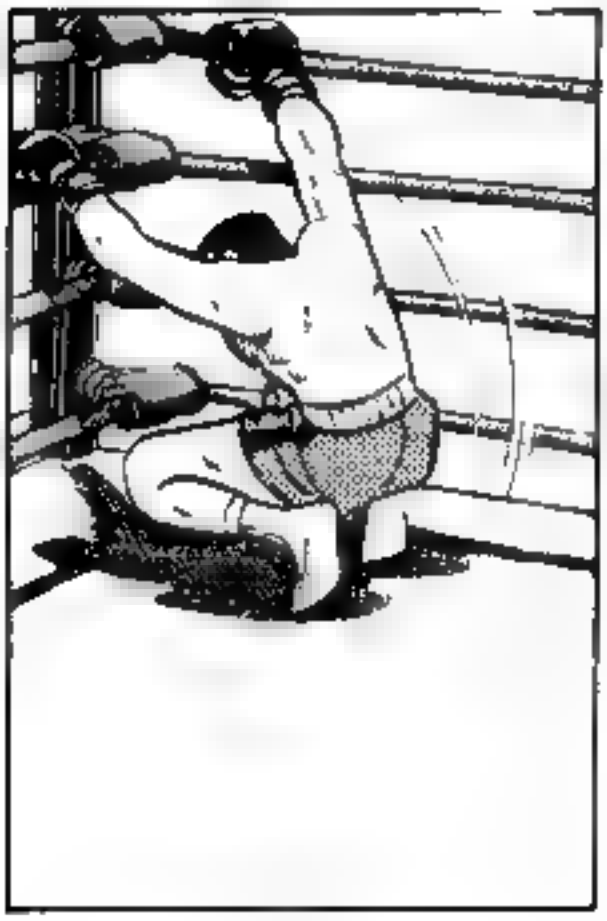
YOU CAN TELL BY THE LOOK ON THEIR FACES THAT OOTAKA AND WOLF ARE ALSO BOTHERED BY IT...

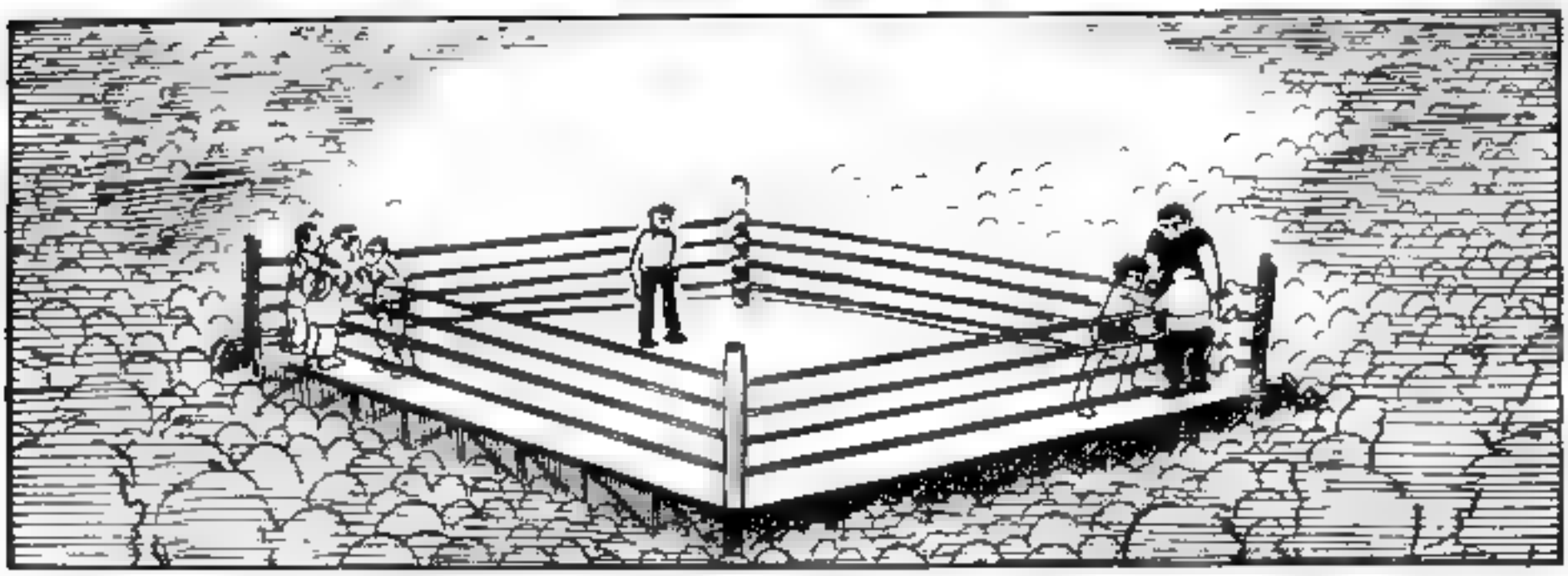
LOOK,

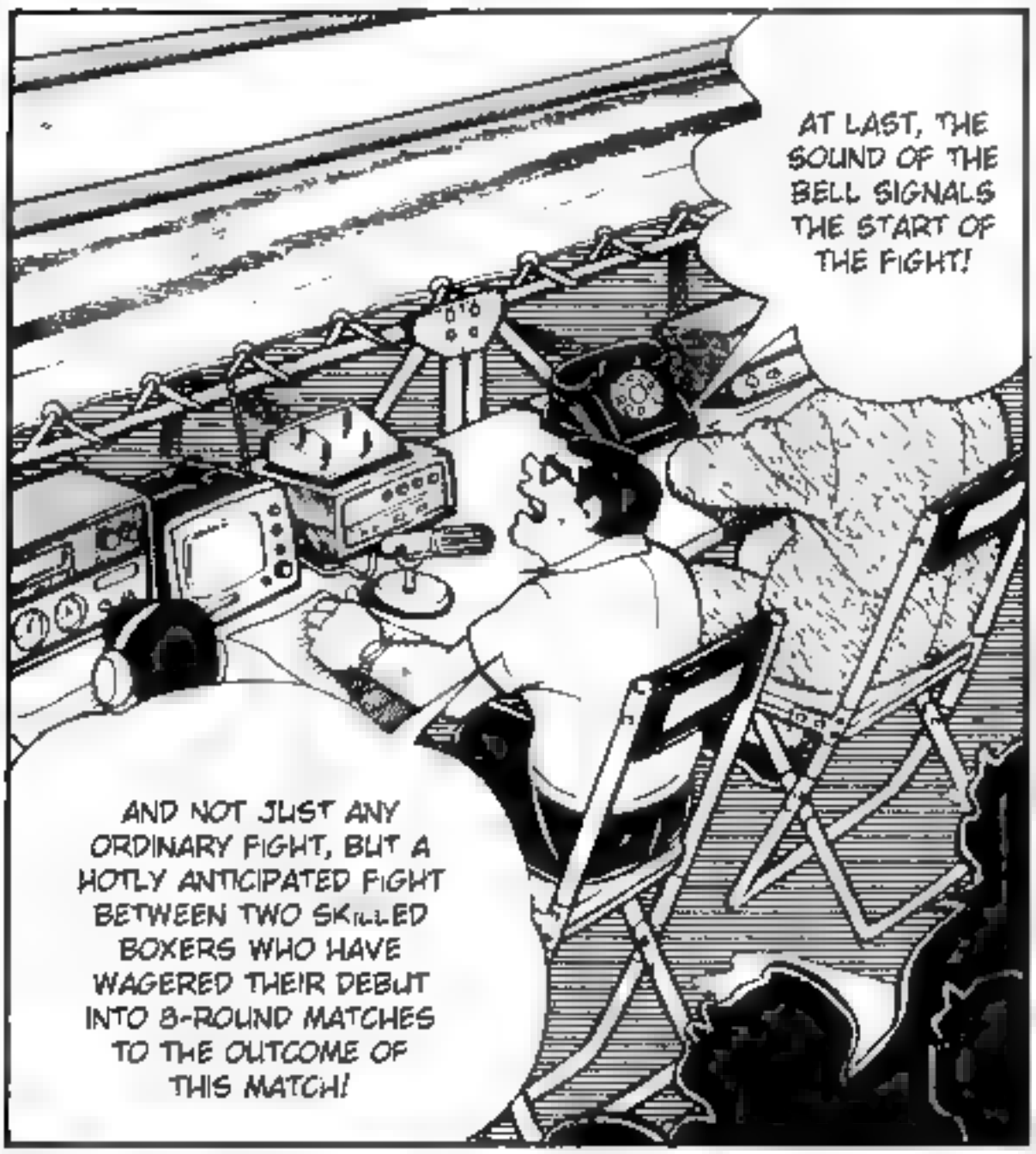
NO, THOSE 3 MUST HAVE GONE THROUGH SOME SORT OF HELLISH TRAINING TOGETHER...

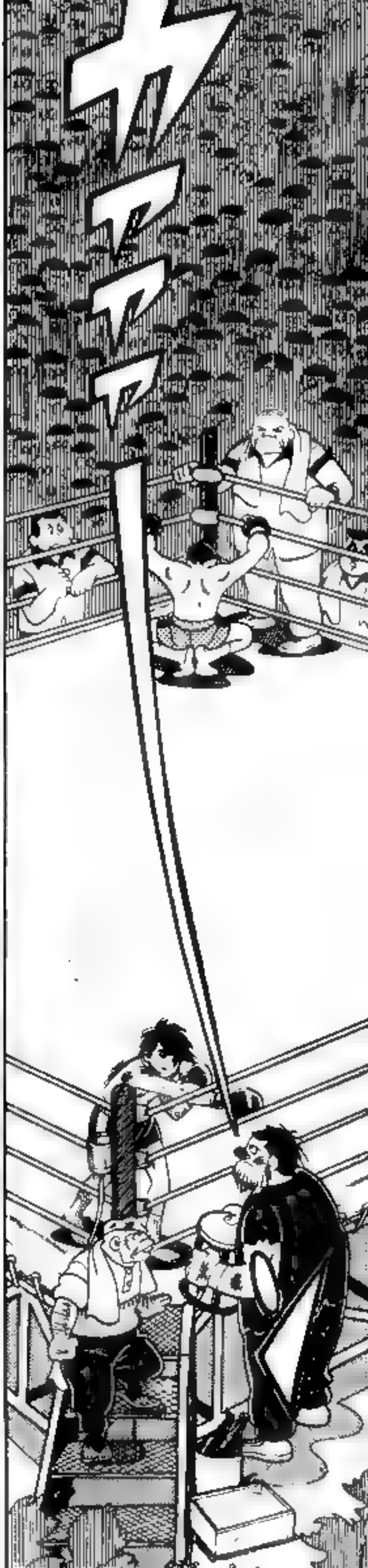
YABUKI-

BOTH FIGHTERS TO THE CENTER OF THE RING!






AT LAST, THE SOUND OF THE BELL SIGNALS THE START OF THE FIGHT!
AND NOT JUST ANY ORDINARY FIGHT, BUT A HOTLY ANTICIPATED FIGHT BETWEEN TWO SKILLED BOXERS WHO HAVE WAGERED THEIR DEBUT INTO 8-ROUND MATCHES TO THE OUTCOME OF THIS MATCH!



THE CROWD HOLDS THEIR BREATH AND LOOKS ON ANXIOUSLY AT WHAT WILL UNFOLD TONIGHT AS THESE TWO TITANS CLASH!

THE STADIUM, NORMALLY DEAFENINGLY LOUD AFTER THE RINGING OF THE BELL, IS EERILY DEAD SILENT TONIGHT!

AHH!

TO EVERYONE'S SURPRISE, YABUKI JOE PUTS UP A GUARD!

T-THIS IS...!

RUMORS SAY THAT WOLF HAS UNDERGONE SECRET TRAINING TO SOMEHOW BLOCK YABUKI'S CROSS COUNTERS.

IF THAT'S TRUE, THEN YABUKI WOULD ONLY BE WALKING INTO WOLF'S TRAP BY PUTTING UP HIS USUAL NO-GUARD STANCE.

IT SEEMS YABUKI JOE HAS DECIDED TO ABANDON HIS USUAL NO-GUARD APPROACH!

HOW UNUSUALLY ORTHODOX OF HIM!

PERHAPS IT'S TO BE EXPE-CTED

THE TWO FIGHTERS CONTINUE TO GLARE AT EACH OTHER ON THE RING. NEITHER IS WILLING TO EVEN JAB! YABUKI STANDS AT THE CENTER OF THE RING WHILE WOLF SLOWLY CIRCLES AROUND HIM LOOKING FOR AN OPENING.

I'M SURE WOLF IS QUITE NERVOUS AT THE TRUE MEANING BEHIND THE BRUISES ON THE BODIES OF YABUKI, TANGE, AND NISHI.

JUST AS YABUKI FEARS WOLF'S SPECIAL TRAINING,

YES, BUT IT'S NOT SURPRISING HE'S BEING SO CAUTIOUS.

WOLF IS UNUSUALLY VERY PATIENT TONIGHT.

IT'S A SITUATION WHERE NEITHER FIGHTER WANTS TO TAKE THE DANGEROUS RISK OF MAKING THE FIRST MOVE!

AND THE SAME GOES FOR YABUKI JOE, WHO DOES THE SAME. YOU COULD CUT THE TENSION IN HERE WITH A KNIFE, FOLKS!

WOLF CONTINUES TO CAUTIOUSLY OBSERVE HIS OPPONENT, WAITING FOR AN OPPORTUNE OPENING.

OH, BUT HE'S TOO FAR AWAY TO HIT ANYTHING

AH! WOLF JABS WITH HIS RIGHT!

ZZZ

ARE YOU THAT SCARED OF JOE!?

WHAT'S WRONG, WOLF!?

NEITHER STILL WANTS TO MAKE THE FIRST MOVE

THE REFEREE ORDERS THEM TO FIGHT BUT .

F-FIGHT!

AHAHAHA!

MAYBE YOU SHOULD'VE BROUGHT YOUR DADDY WITH YA IF YOU'RE SO SCARED!

STOP TRYING TO PUT ON AIRS AND LAY WOLF FLAT ON THE RING ALREADY!

AND YOU TOO, JOE! WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR PRIDE AS THE BRAWLER JOE!?

WE DIDN'T COME ALL THE WAY HERE TO WATCH YOU DANCE AROUND EACH OTHER!

COME ON!

. . . .

NGH ..

ATTACK, WOLF!

DAMN IT!

G-GOT IT.

NOW FIGHT!

GET A GRIP, YOU TWO!

WOLF MAKES HIS MOVE!

NGH!

A JAB! AND ANOTHER JAB!
OOF!
KO
AH!

AHH!

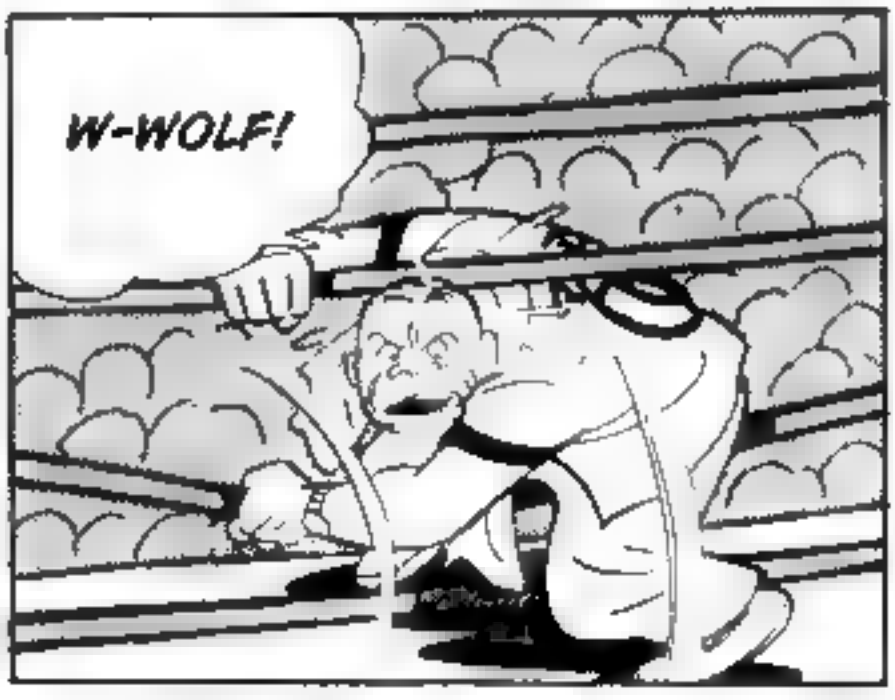
AHH!

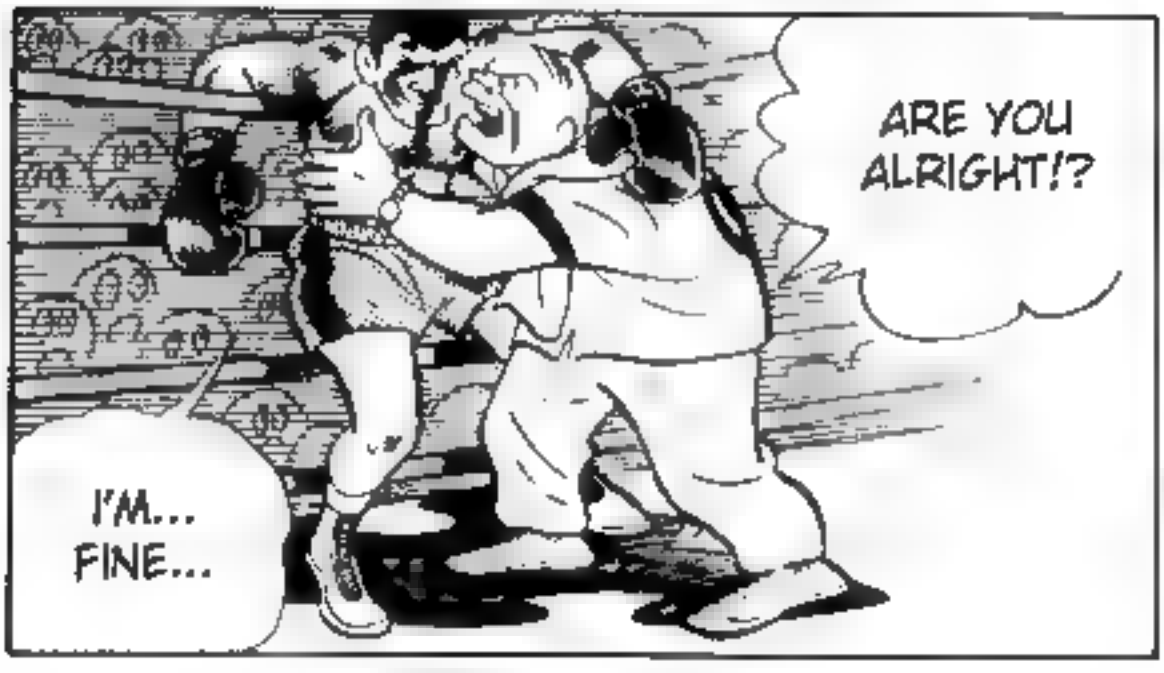
OH!

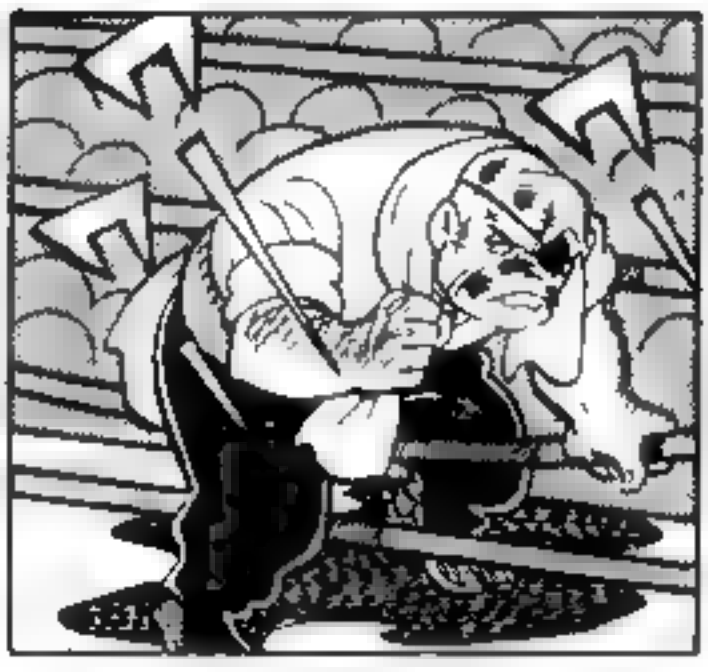
...

N-NO!
TURN, WOLF, TURN!

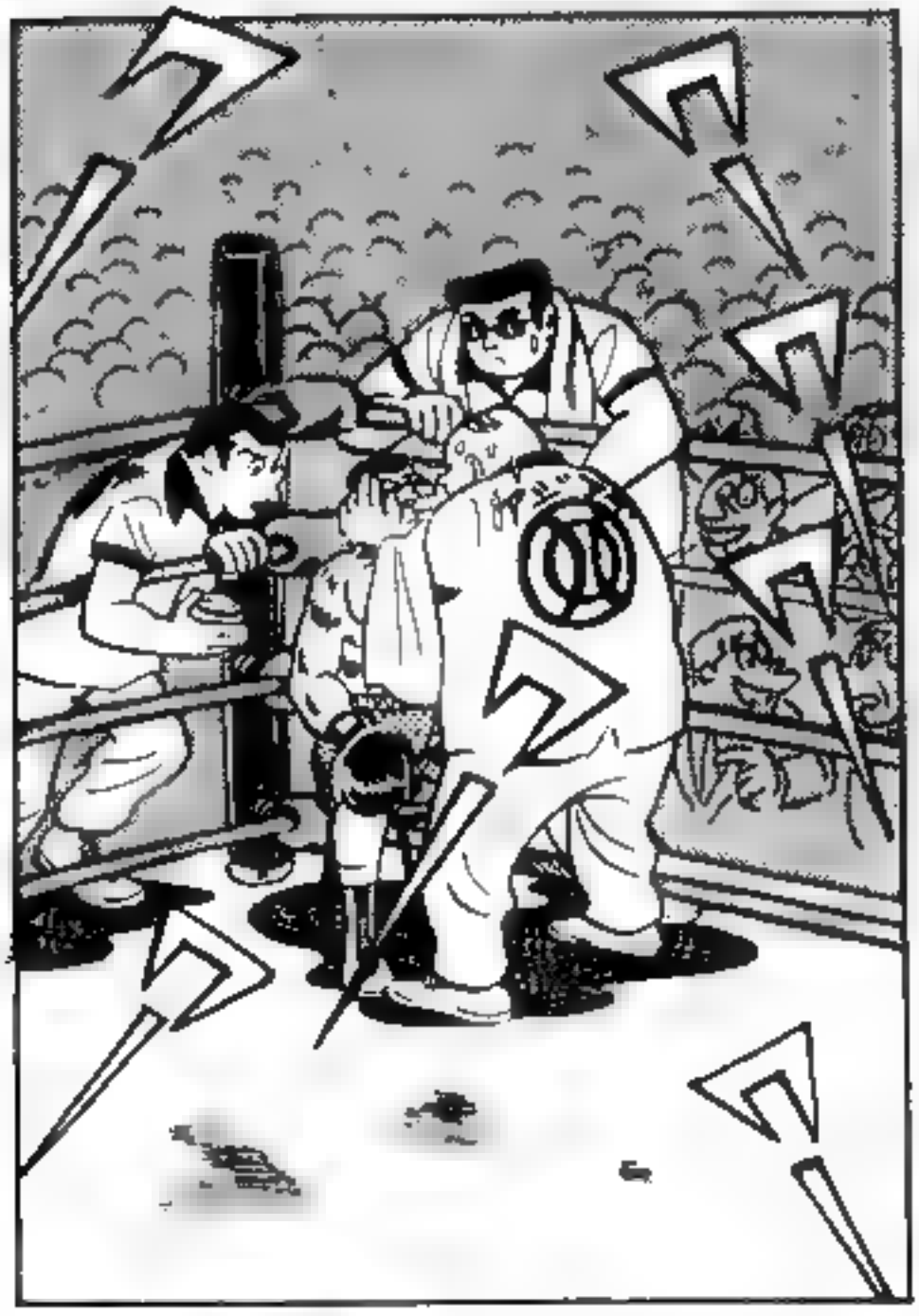
THAT'S THE END OF ROUND 1!
S-STOP!


W-WOLF!


ARE YOU ALRIGHT!?
I'M... FINE...



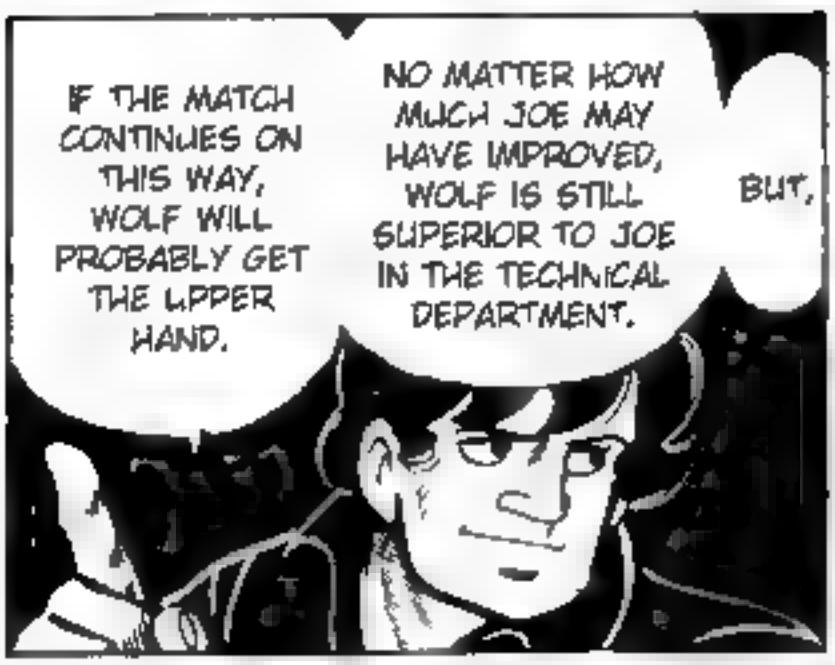
WHAT A SURPRISING TURN OF EVENTS! AND WHAT AN ATTACK BY YABUKI JOE!



THAT'S WHAT I'M TALKIN' ABOUT!
YOU'RE A BEAST OUT THERE, JOE! A MAN-EATING BEAST!
THAT WAS TOO COOL!
DO IT JUST LIKE THAT IN THE NEXT ROUND TOO!

YES, CERTAINLY.
WHAT A STUNNING OFFENSIVE THAT WAS BY YABUKI! IN THE CLOSING MOMENTS OF ROUND 1, WOULDN'T YOU AGREE?

THE YABUKI JOE OF THE PAST WOULD NEVER HAVE BEEN ABLE TO DODGE THAT UPPERCUT BY WOLF THE WAY HE DID JUST NOW IN ROUND 1.
HIS ATTACKS WERE EXCELLENT BUT HIS DEFENSE WAS JUST AS SPLENDID TOO.


IF THE MATCH CONTINUES ON THIS WAY, WOLF WILL PROBABLY GET THE UPPER HAND.
NO MATTER HOW MUCH JOE MAY HAVE IMPROVED, WOLF IS STILL SUPERIOR TO JOE IN THE TECHNICAL DEPARTMENT.
BUT,

VERY GOOD...
YES.
LOOKS LIKE YOU'VE IMPROVED QUITE A BIT, YABUKI. .

THEN I'D BE PARTICULARLY WORRIED ABOUT WOLF'S RESPONSE IN THE UPCOMING ROUNDS.
IF HE DIDN'T,
NO, I DOUBT IT. HE MUST HAVE SOMETHING ELSE STILL UP HIS SLEEVES.

DO YOU THINK THAT HIGH-LEVEL DODGING WAS WHAT JOE'S SPECIAL TRAINING WAS ALL ABOUT...?
I HAD HEARD THAT YABUKI JOE UNDERWENT SPECIAL TRAINING OF HIS OWN TO COUNTER WOLF'S SPECIAL TRAINING BUT .

IN ANY CASE, ROUND 1 WAS NOTHING MORE THAN EACH SIDE TRYING TO PROBE THE OTHER FOR THEIR HIDDEN WEAPONS.
SO BOTH PLAYERS STILL HAVE YET TO REVEAL THEIR ACES.
I SEE,
THAT'S RIGHT. WE DIDN'T GET TO SEE WHAT THE PRODUCT OF WOLF'S SECRET TRAINING WAS IN THAT ROUND JUST NOW

HOW WILL JOE COME OUT...?

HOW ROUND 2 WILL UNFOLD...

ONE CAN ONLY GUESS,

ARE THOSE THREE'S WOUNDS BOTHERING YOU THAT MUCH?

WOLF, YOU SEEM PRETTY STIFF...

AND HOW WILL WOLF RESPOND?

SECONDS STEP OUT OF THE RING!

WITH THE FACILITIES AND MANPOWER THEY HAVE, IT'S NOT SURPRISING THAT THEY'D GET INJURED EVERYTIME THEY TRIED TO DO A BIT OF TRAINING.

I MEAN, JUST THINK ABOUT IT. THE TANGE BOXING CLUB IS A PISS POOR GYM THAT ONLY HAS 3 MEMBERS!

I DON'T THINK IT'S ANYTHING TO BE WORRIED ABOUT

IF YOU ASK ME,

IS NOT ONLY BECAUSE HE KNOWS HIS CROSS COUNTERS WON'T WORK ON YOU ANYMORE BUT ALSO BECAUSE HE FEARS YOU'LL USE IT AGAINST HIM.

AND THE REASON WHY THAT KIDS' NOT USING HIS USUAL NO-GUARD STANCE,

WHAT MR. OOTAKA SAYS IS RIGHT...

YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO DANCE ALL OVER HIM WITH YOUR SUPERIOR TECHNIQUES!

SO SINCE HE'S RESORTED TO AN ORTHODOX STYLE, THERE'S NOTHING FOR YOU TO BE AFRAID OF!

NOT ONLY THAT I HAVE A SECRET WEAPON TO USE AGAINST HIS NO-GUARD STANCE CROSS COUNTERS.

AND EXPERI-ENCE.

I'M SUPERIOR IN BOTH TECH-NIQUE,

BUT IT WON'T HAPPEN THIS ROUND...!

YOU MAY HAVE GOTTEN THE BETTER OF ME LAST ROUND BECAUSE OF MY NERVOUSNESS,

AH!

IT PISSES ME O-

YOU AND THAT STUPID CALM MUG OF YOURS. !

NGHH...

AHH!

W-WHAAAAAAA!?

I'M BEGGING YOU, STAND UP!

WOLF!

A DOWN!

T-THAT WAS...

WOLF WAS KNOCKED DOWN!

AH!

STAND UP!

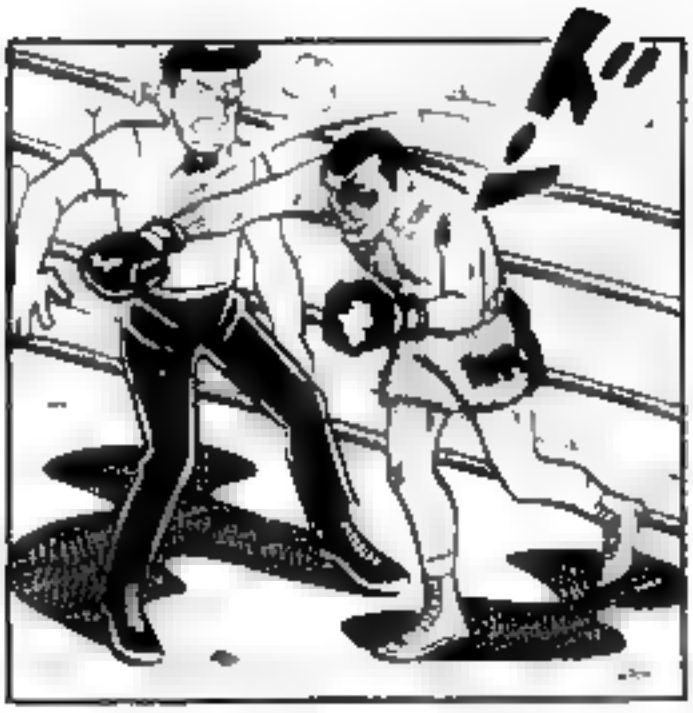
3!

4!

5!

WOLF, WHO HAS NEVER BEEN KNOCKED DOWN EVEN ONCE IN HIS CAREER, HAS BEEN LAID FLAT ON THE GROUND IN THE BLINK OF AN EYE!

I CAN'T BELIEVE WHAT I'M SEEING!


K"

C-CAN YOU FIGHT...?
HUFF
HUFF
HUFF

HUFF
HUFF
HUFF

F-FIGHT!

BUT SOMETHING FEELS OFF ABOUT THE ONLOOKERS OUTSIDE THE RING AS WELL

WITH THAT UNEXPECTED OUTCOME, THE WHOLE ATMOSPHERE ON THE RING FEELS EERILY OFF TONIGHT!
NOT JUST ON THE RING,
THE FIGHT RESUMES!

THEY DO HAVE SOMETHING PLANNED AFTER ALL
I KNEW IT

EVEN THOUGH IN THE OTHER MATCHES THEY WERE USUALLY BUSY SCREAMING THEIR HEADS OFF AT YABUKI...
BOTH TANGE AND NISHI ONLY SILENTLY LOOK ON AT THE MATCH.

C'MON WOLF! USE YOUR FEET!

USE YOUR FEET TO GET AROUND HIM, WOLF!

YOUR FEET!

PANT

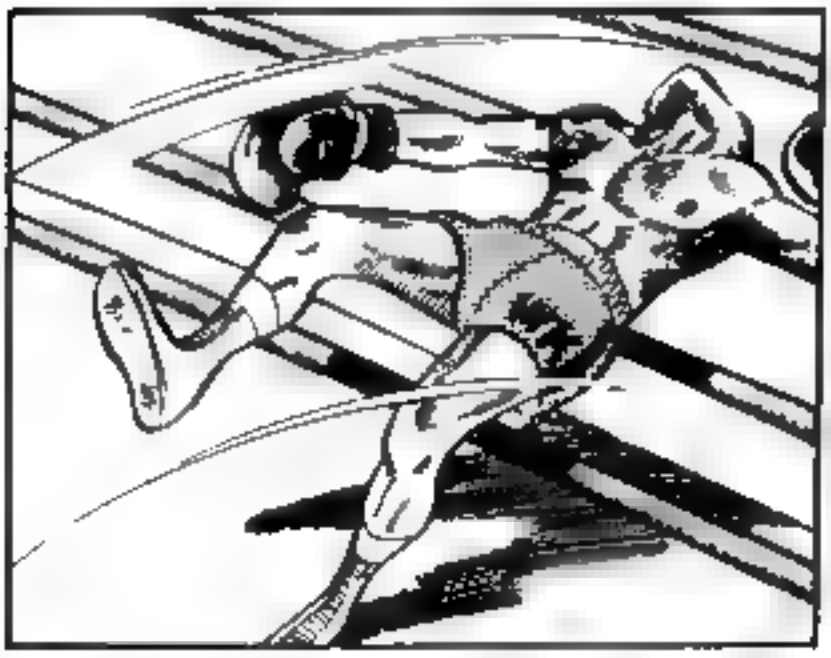
PANT

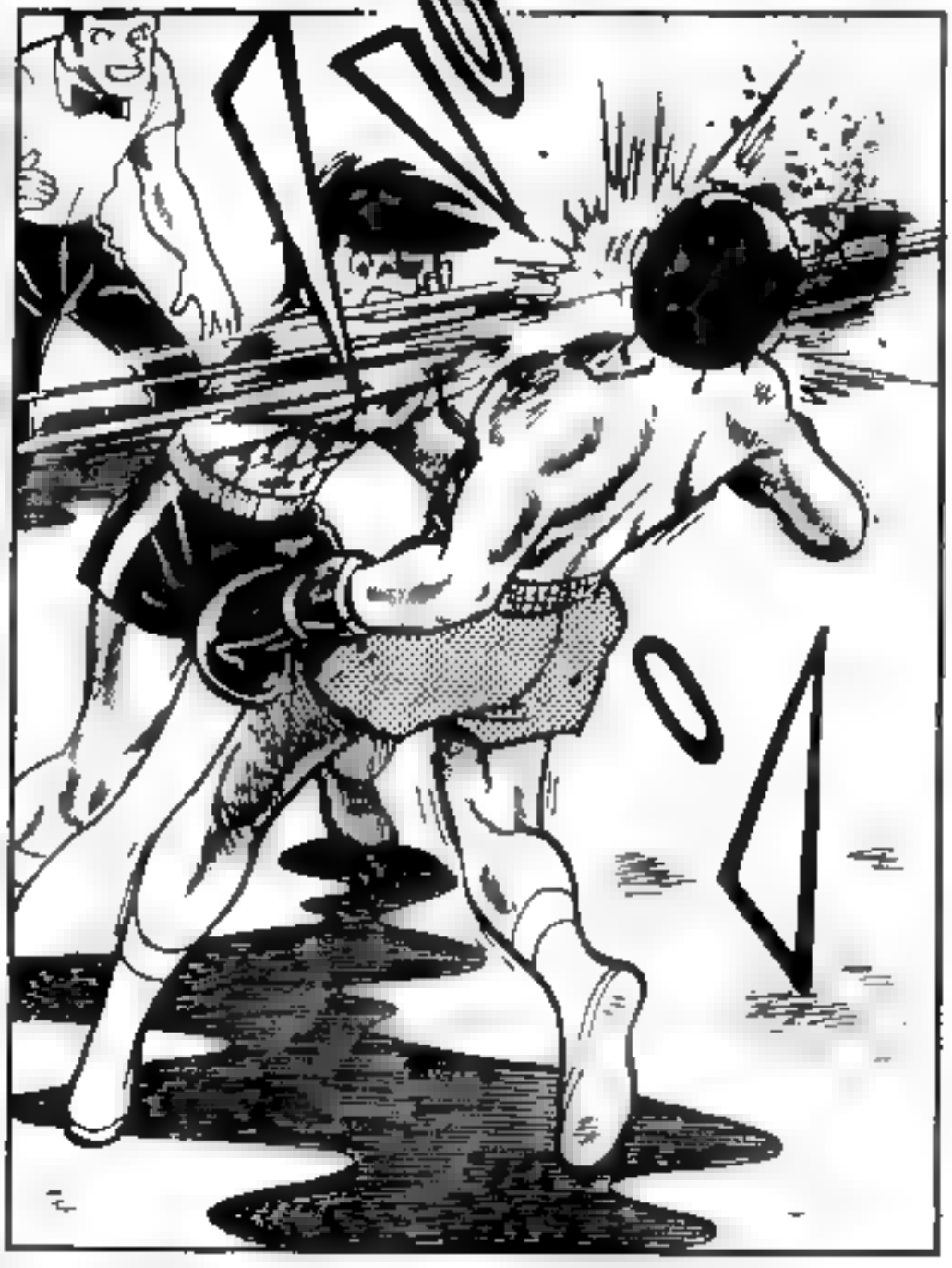
PANT

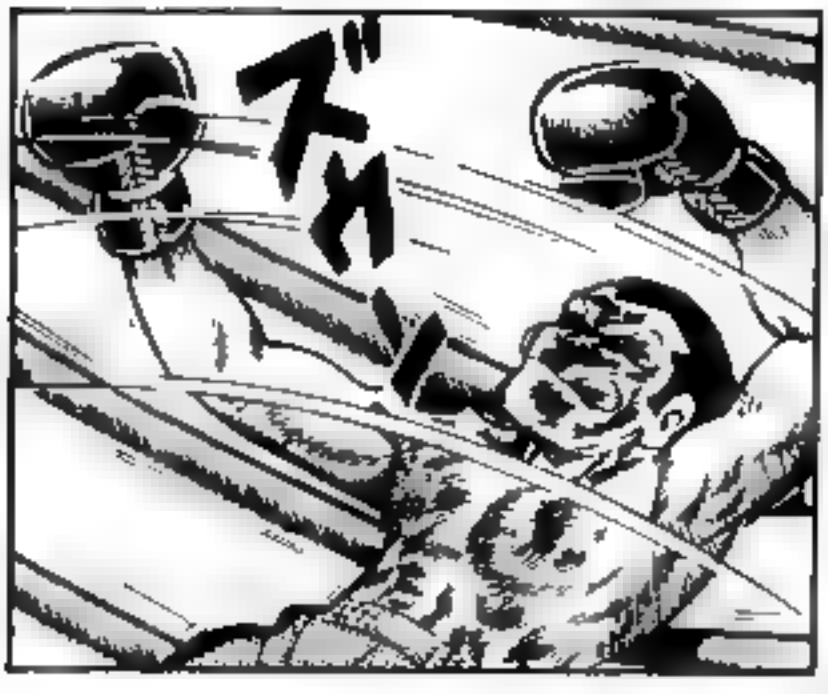
HUFF HUFF

GIVE'IM ANOTHER ONE!

ATTA BOY!







YOU...

WHY...

HE DID IT!

THAT'S ANOTHER DOWN!

DID YOU SEE THAT PUNCH JUST NOW!?

1!

2!

3!

4!

W-WOLF IS DOWN!

THAT'S HIS 2ND DOWN THIS ROUND ALONE!

PLEASE! PLEASE JUST GET UP!

STAND UP, WOLF!

AN UNBELIEVABLE BLOW!

YABUKI'S DEADLY STRAIGHT HITS ITS TARGET STRAIGHT ON!

WILL WOLF BE ABLE TO STAND UP!?

8!

7!

6!

F-FIGHT!

WK

WOLF.

OH THANK GOD!

ONE MORE DOWN IN THIS ROUND AND YABUKI WILL WIN BY KO...

JUST ONE MORE

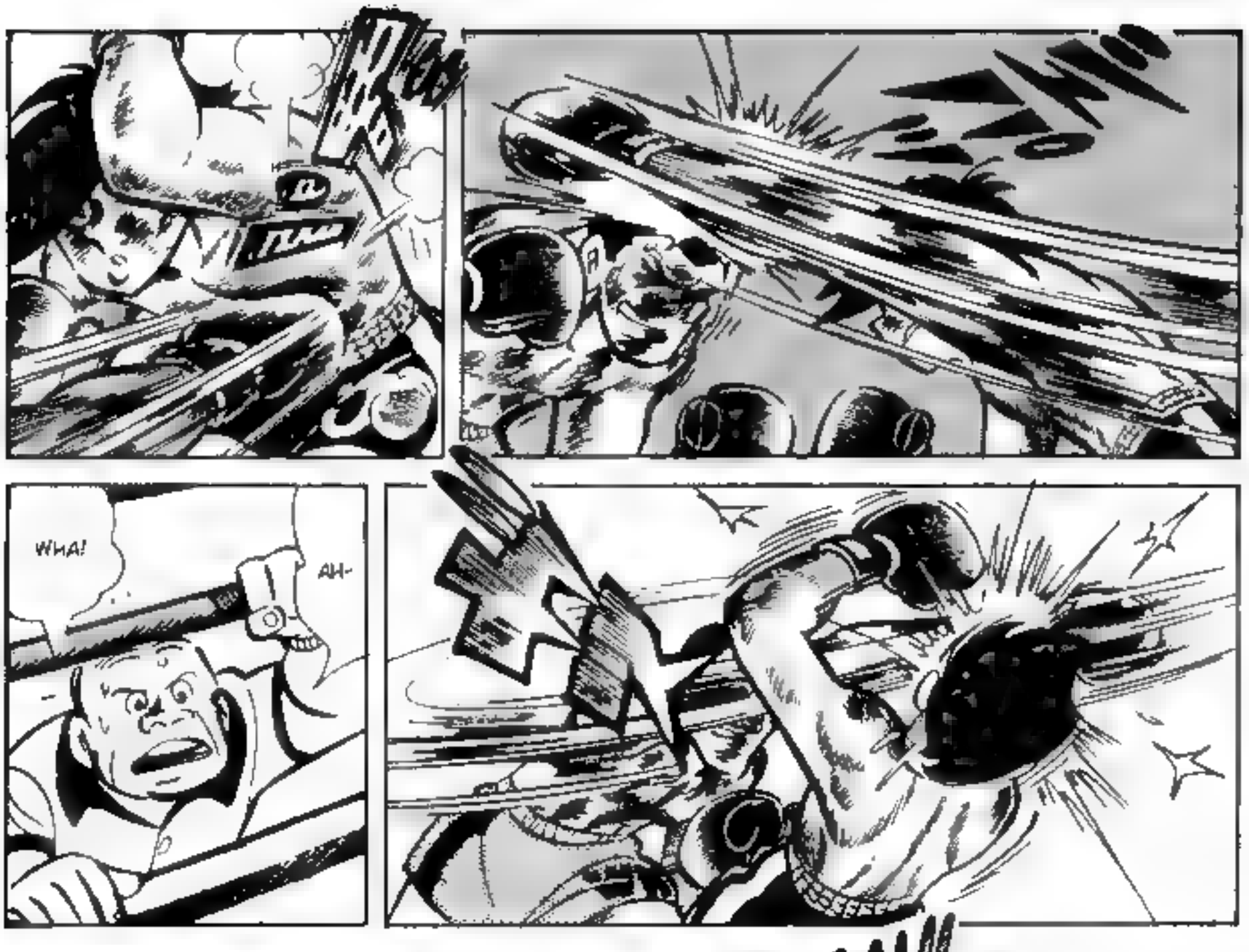
HUFF

HUFF

HUFF

DON'T GET COCKY-

GUH!


WHA!
AH-

YES!
Y-

I'M MILES AHEAD OF YOU IN TECHNIQUE!
I SAID DON'T GET COCKY!

WOLF'S FINALLY ON THE OFFEN-SIVE!

D-DID YOU SEE THAT!? WOLF'S PUNCHES ARE HITTING!

WHA!

HOLY MOLY...

WHAT'S WRONG, BRALWER JOE!?

DON'T GIVE HIM A MOMENT TO RECOVER!

ATTA BOY!

ALRIGHT, WOLF! KEEP ON PUM-MELING HIM!

UGH!

DAMN YOU!

RING RING RING

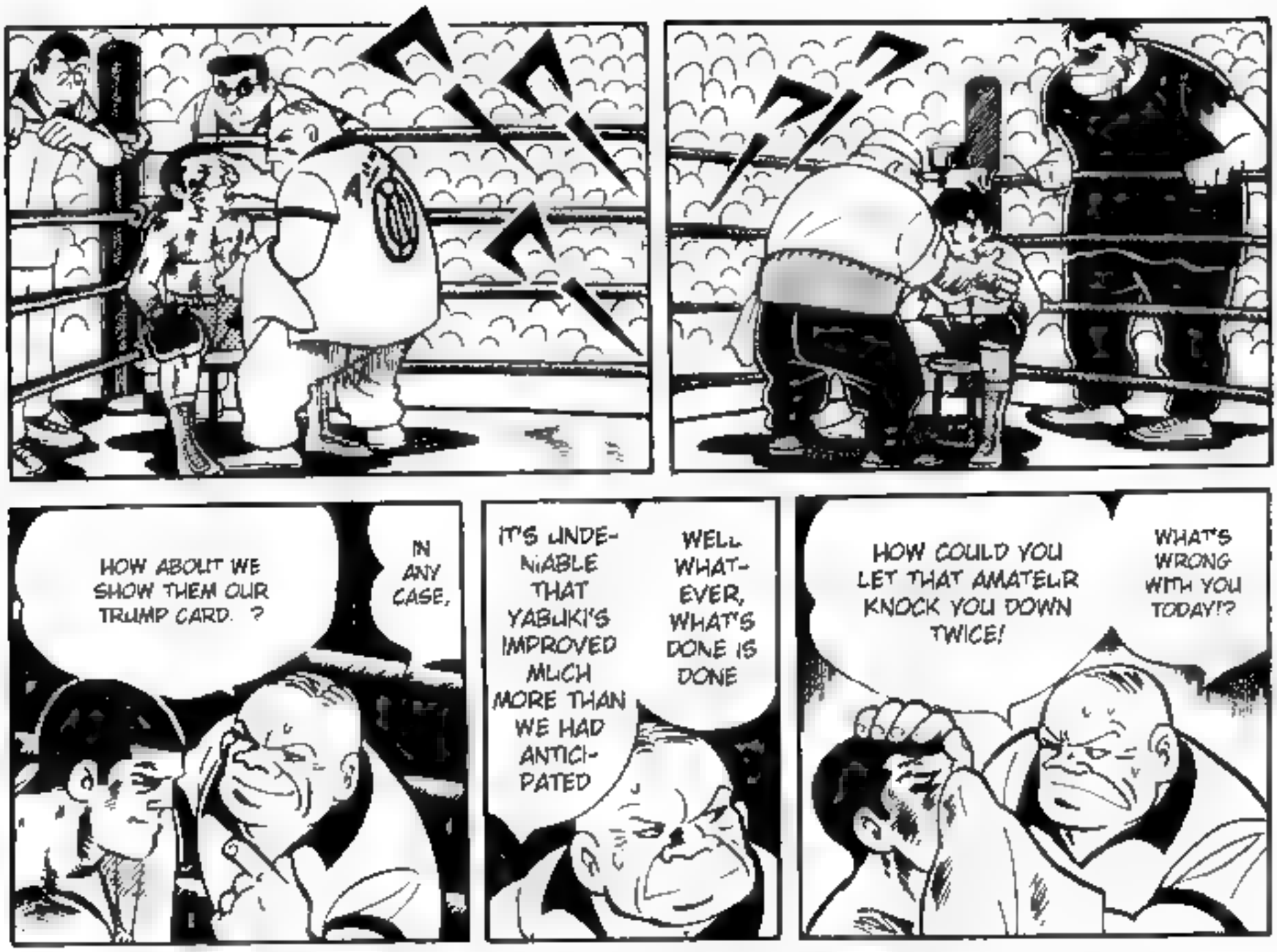
W-

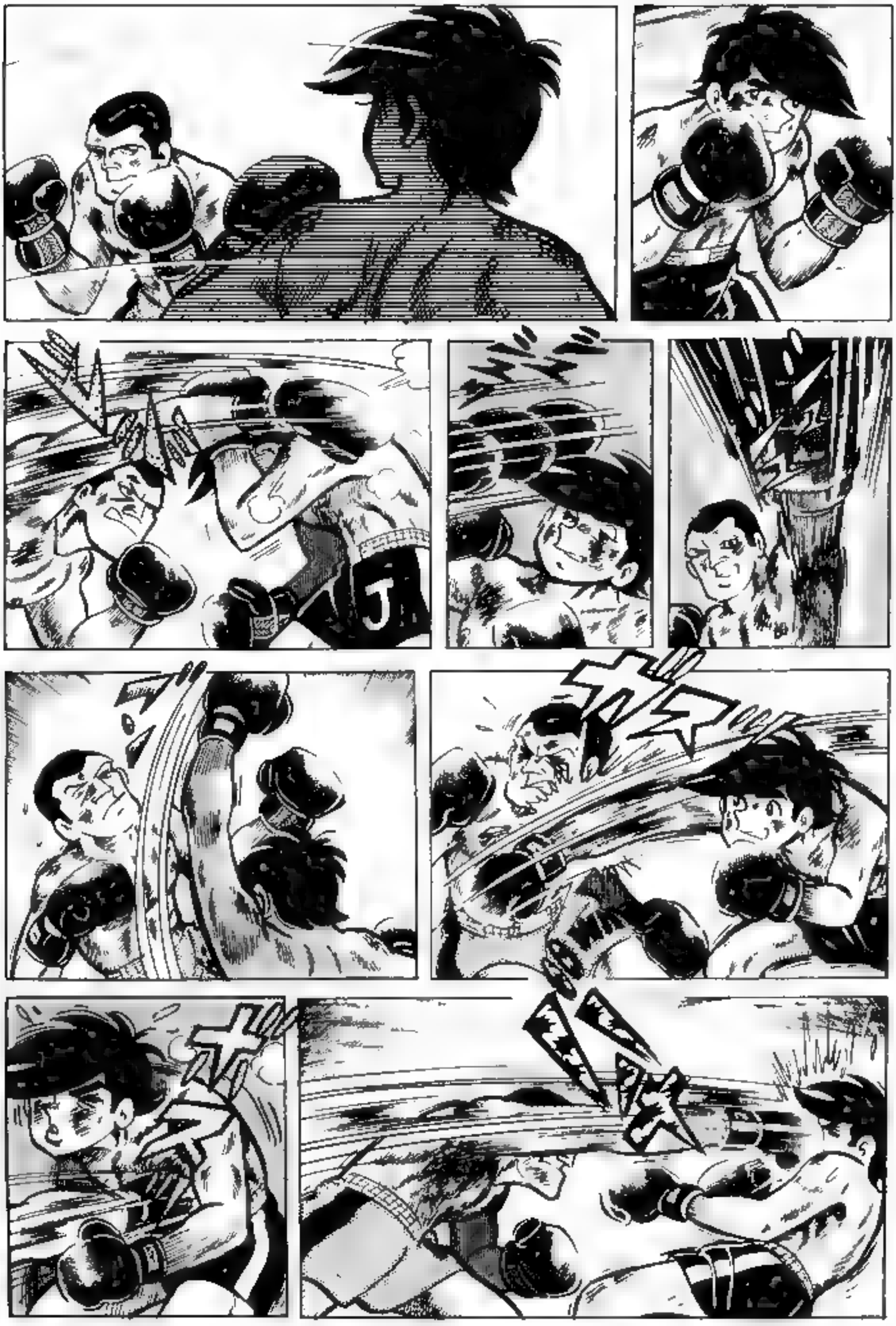
WHEW.

WHEW...

ARE YOU ALRIGHT!?

WOLF!


HOW ABOUT WE SHOW THEM OUR TRUMP CARD. ?
IN ANY CASE,
IT'S UNDE-NIABLE THAT YABUKI'S IMPROVED MUCH MORE THAN WE HAD ANTICI-PATED
WELL WHAT-EVER, WHAT'S DONE IS DONE
HOW COULD YOU LET THAT AMATEUR KNOCK YOU DOWN TWICE!
WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU TODAY!?
IN A STRAIGHT UP CLOSE QUARTERS BOXING, YOU SHOULD DEFINITELY HAVE THE EDGE
GO RIGHT ON THE ATTACK!
WELL THEN, JUST KEEP PUSHING HIM AS YOU WERE JUST DOING.
AH, THAT'S RIGHT.
THAT IS, NOT UNTIL HE TAKES THAT NO-GUARD STANCE OF HIS. .
I. CAN'T .
GO!
ROUND 3 START!



GUH!

UNLIKE THE PREVIOUS ROUNDS, IT SEEMS WOLF IS GAINING THE UPPER HAND

BUT ..

AN EXPLOSION OF PUNCHES!

W-WHAT A STUPENDOUS EXCHANGE OF BLOWS!

YABUKI RETREATS!

WOLF'S LEFT STRAIGHT HITS AGAIN!

YABUKI'S CAUGHT ON THE ROPES!

A BODY BLOW BY WOLF!

IT'S A COMPLETE REVERSAL OF LAST ROUND!

YABUKI IS COMPLETELY HELD ON THE DEFENSIVE!

WOLF HITS AND HITS!

AIM FOR THE JAW!

THAT'S IT, WOLF!

FINISH HIM WITH AN UPPERCUT!

STOP!

ぐふ!!

THIS TIME, IT'S YABUKI JOE WHO'S DOWN!

DOWN!

BACK TO YOUR CORNER!

KA-

YOU WERE DOING SO WELL JUST A MINUTE AGO!

WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU, JOE!?

GET UP, BRAWLER JOE!

HAHA! YOU DID IT!

8!

7!

6!

5!

4!

3!

DO IT.

...

....

...!?

OHH!

AH!

AH!

ゴー

ン

HEH HEH

IT'S FINALLY OUT...

IT'S THE NO-GUARD STANCE!

I-I-IT'S...

F-FIGHT!

HE FINALLY PULLED IT OUT!

HIS TRADEMARK NO-GUARD STANCE STRATEGY!

IT'S ABOUT TIME! WHY DIDN'T YA DO IT EARLIER!?

I'LL ENJOY THIS!

BUT THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR ALL ALONG.

SO HE FINALLY RESORTS BACK TO HIS CROSS-COUNTERS NOW THAT HE'S BEEN DRIVEN INTO A CORNER

ZIP

GOT IT...

FINISH HIM WITH *THAT!*

WOLF! NO NEED TO WEAR HIM DOWN ANYMORE!

はあ

I SAID I WOULD USE MY LEFT STRAIGHT FOR SURE.

REMEMBER WHAT I SAID BACK IN TANGE GYM?

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ふう

IT'S TIME I KEPT THAT PROMISE

ANKS.

TH..

ACK!

I-IT'S A CROSS COUNTER!

ドカ

ジコ

AGHHH! J-JOE!

I DID IT

I...

KOO

YOU DID IT, WOLF!

HAHA! YOU SURE DID, WOLF! YOU SMASHED HIS CROSS-COUNTER!

I DID IT!

I...

JOE!

BACK TO YOUR CORNER!

3!

2!

1!

DAMN IT!

I THOUGHT HIS CROSS-COUNTER CONNECTED BEAUTIFULLY...

W-WHAT HAPPENED...?

THEN WHY IS JOE THE ONE LYING ON THE RING...?

THIS ISN'T GOOD...

AH...

W-WHERE ARE YOU GOING, RIKIISHI!?

I HAVE TO GO... I MIGHT BE THE ONLY ONE TO WAKE H.M BACK UP...!

ARE YOU JUST GOING TO GO DOWN THAT EASILY WITHOUT EVER FIGHTING ME, RIKIISHI TOORU, AGAIN!?

STAND UP, JOE!

RETURN TO YOUR SEAT!

STOP THAT! YOU OF ALL PEOPLE SHOULD KNOW BETTER THAN TO ACT IRRATIONALLY LIKE THIS!

IF YOU HAVE ANY INTENTION OF SETTLING THINGS WITH ME ONCE AND FOR ALL, YOU'LL STNAD UP THIS INSTANT!

I SAID STAND UP!

AH!

7!

6!

5!

8...

UGH

STILL FIGHT REF

I CAN

9!

HE STOOD UP!

OHH!

...

...

WIPE YOUR GLOVES FIRST.

TO THINK HE'D STILL BE ABLE TO STAND UP AFTER TAKING WOLF'S SPECIAL WEAPON FULL ON.

D-DAMN IT..

UNBE-LIEV-ABLE!

HE JUST BARELY GETS BACK UP!

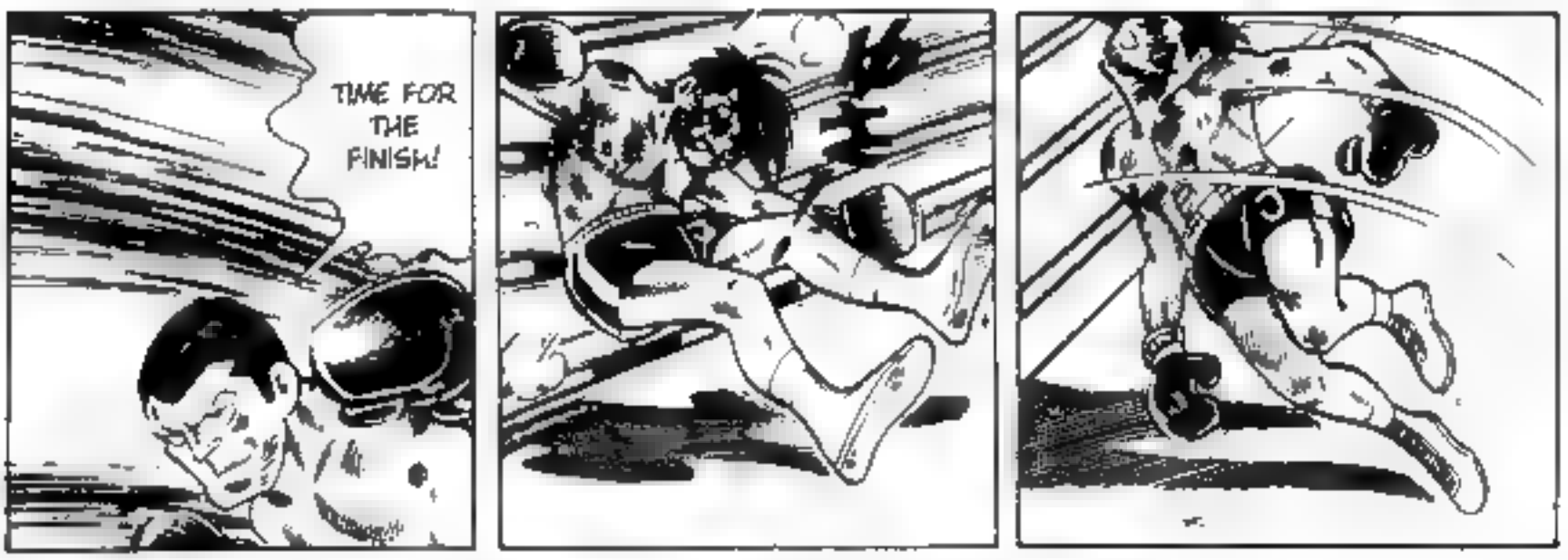
YABUKI STANDS UP!

NGHH...

FIGHT!

F-

DAMN.


TIME FOR THE FINISH!

STOP!

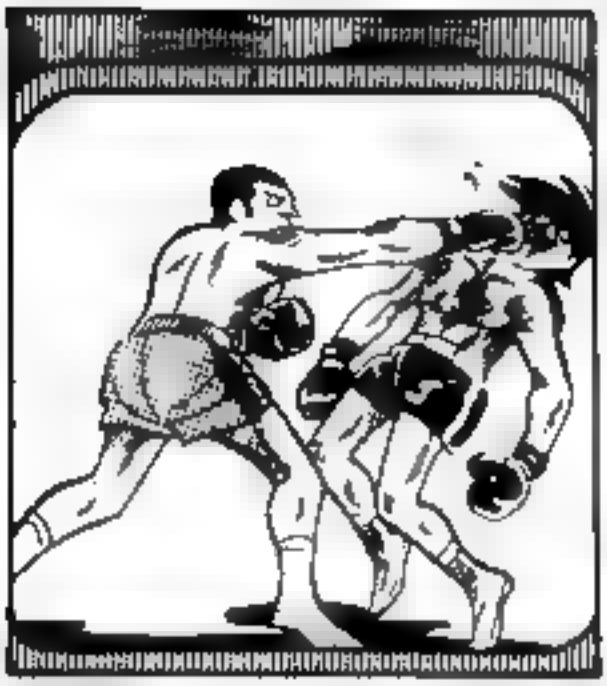
THE ROUND'S OVER!

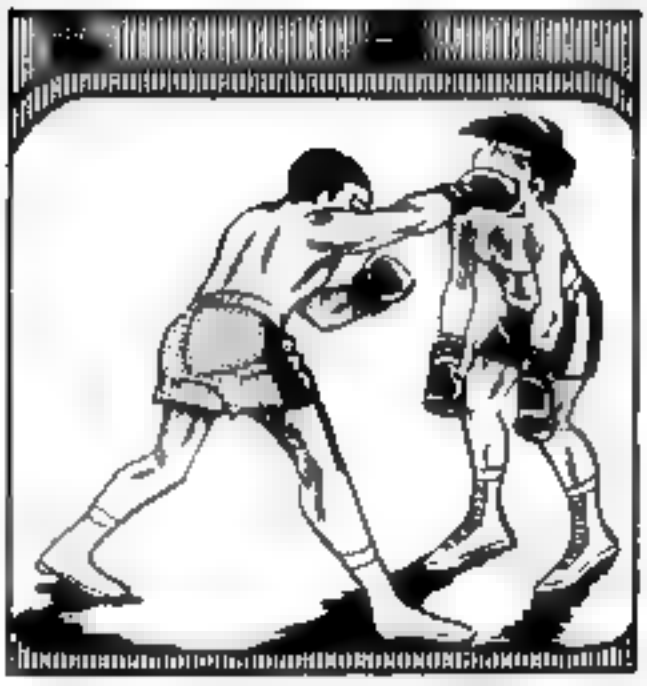
CAN'T YOU HEAR THE BELL!?

I SAID STOP!

FOR GOD'S SAKE...!
GO BACK TO YOUR OWN CORNER!

HANG IN THERE, JOE!
HERE'S THE WATER AND THE OINTMENT!
BARELY SAVED BY THE BELL...
HAHA.. HE'S A LUCKY ONE, ALRIGHT.
LET'S TAKE A LOOK AT THE INSTANT REPLAY
BUT THE BIGGER WORRY IN EVERYONE'S MIND IS HOW YABUKI JOE WAS ON THE RECEIVING END OF HIS SPECIAL CROSS-COUNTER!
YABUKI HAS BEEN BEATEN TO A BLOODY PULP!
WHAT A ROUND THAT WAS!

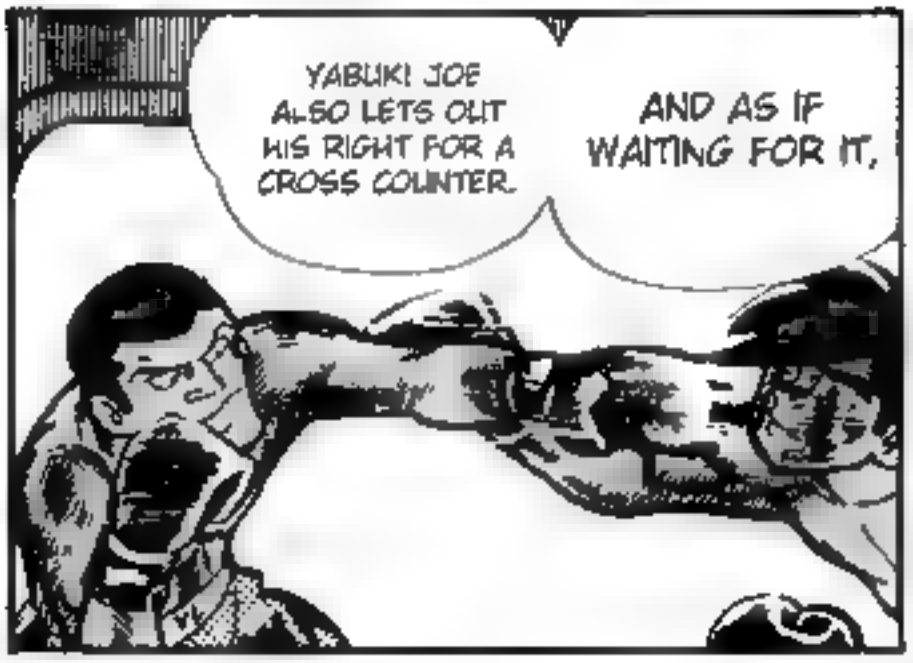


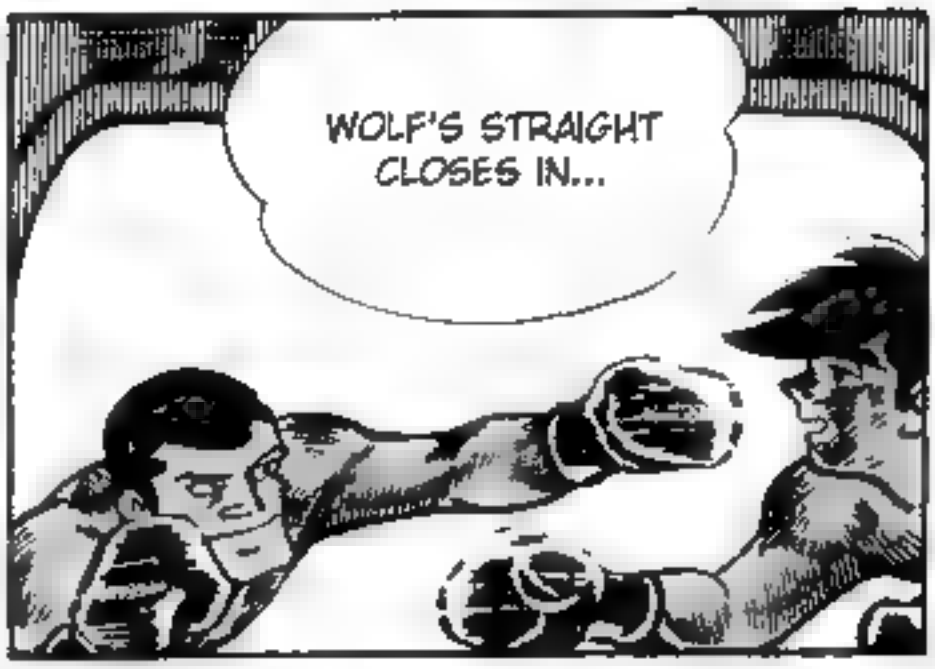


THIS IS THE LEFT STRAIGHT BY WOLF THAT LED TO THE WHOLE INCIDENT!
THIS IS IT!

AH-
WOLF LOWERS HIS STANCE. .

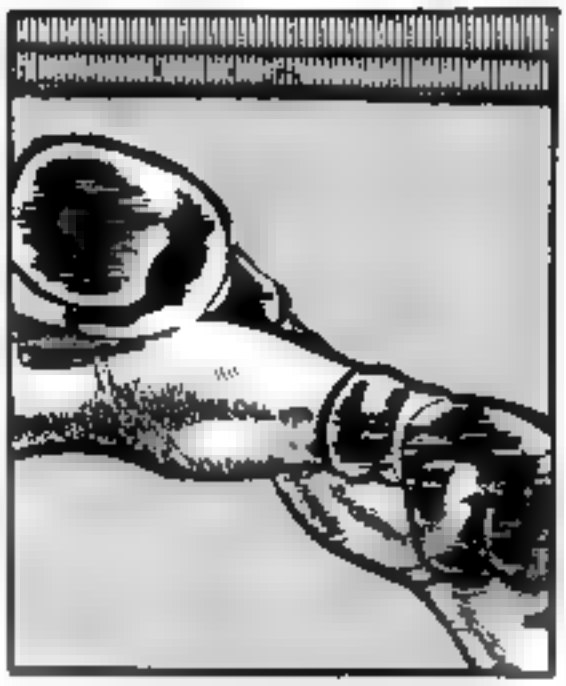
WHAT A PUNISH-MENT DISHED OUT BY WOLF!
THIS IS WHEN YABUK! JUST ASSUMED HIS NO-GUARD STANCE AND WOLF WAS ON THE OFFENSIVE


YABUK! JOE ALSO LETS OUT HIS RIGHT FOR A CROSS COUNTER.
AND AS IF WAITING FOR IT,


WOLF'S STRAIGHT CLOSES IN...

L-LOOK RIGHT HERE, FOLKS! LOOK AT WOLF'S LEFT STRAIGHT.. !

AHH!
UP UNTIL THIS POINT, IT LOOKS LIKE YABUK. IS ABOUT TO LAND HIS CROSS COUNTER BUT



WOLF FORMS A "V" WITH HIS LEFT ARM TO BLOCK YABUKI'S CROSS COUNTER!

INSTEAD OF LANDING ON WOLF'S JAW

HE USES HIS RIGHT STRAIGHT...

AH, THIS IS IT!

AND THEN

AN AMAZING BLOW!

TO PUNCH JOE'S FACE WHICH IS NOW UNGUARDED AND LEANING IN...!

IN OTHER WORDS, WOLF SET A TRAP FOR YABUKI THAT WORKED MAGNIFI-CENTLY!

ONLY TO PULL IT BACK AT THE LAST MOMENT TO BLOCK YABUKI JOE'S CROSS COUNTER AND HIT HIM WITH A RIGHT STRAIGHT...!

FAKING WITH A LEFT STRAIGHT,

BECAUSE JOE WAS LEANING IN TO CONNECT HIS CROSS COUNTER, WOLF'S RIGHT STRAIGHT HAD THE SAME EFFECT AS A POWERFUL COUNTER!

NOT ONLY THAT,

SO THIS IS HOW HE COUNTERED THE COUNTER!

I SEE!

YABUKI JOE WAS KNOCKED DOWN NOT BY WOLF'S LEFT, BUT BY WOLF'S RIGHT STRAIGHT!

I COULDN'T EVEN SEE WOLF PUNCHING WITH HIS RIGHT...

SO WHEN HE FINALLY DID USE A LEFT STRAIGHT, YABUKI MUST HAVE JUMPED AT THE RARE CHANCE.

ALTHOUGH WOLF ATTACKED WITH LEFT HOOKS AND UPPERCUTS, HE PREVIOUSLY NEVER USED A LEFT STRAIGHT UP UNTIL JUST NOW.

AS SOME OF YOU MAY ALREADY REALIZE,

HOW TERRI-FYING...

...

CHEER UP!

HAHAHA. WHAT'S WRONG, TANGE?

HA HA HA

AFTER ALL, IT DOESN'T EVEN SEEM LIKE HE HAS THE STRENGTH TO GET BACK UP.

YABUKI JOE IS A TREMENDOUSLY TALENTED BOXER WITH ENORMOUS POTENTIAL. SO INSTEAD OF RUINING HIS FUTURE, WHY DON'T YOU JUST THROW IN THE TOWEL ALREADY?

WORD OF ADVICE TO YOU AS A FELLOW CLUB OWNER.

I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT YOU'RE BABBLING ON ABOUT

....

SECONDS STEP OUT OF THE RING!

SHOW NO REMORSE AND FINISH HIM OFF!

WALKING MIGHT JUST BE ALL HE CAN DO..!

IT LOOKS AS IF YABUKI'S LEGS ARE DEAD.

WOLF AND YABUKI BOTH LEAVE THEIR CORNERS.

ROUND 3 BEGINS!

THE BRAWLER WHO DEFIES ALL LOGIC, THE KILLER WHO MAKES THE IMPOSSIBLE POSSIBLE, THE WILD BEAST YABUKI JOE!

IT'S ALRIGHT... YOU'RE STILL STANDING...!

THE MEDIA GAVE HIM MANY SUCH NICKNAMES BUT IT SEEMS WITH THIS ROUND...

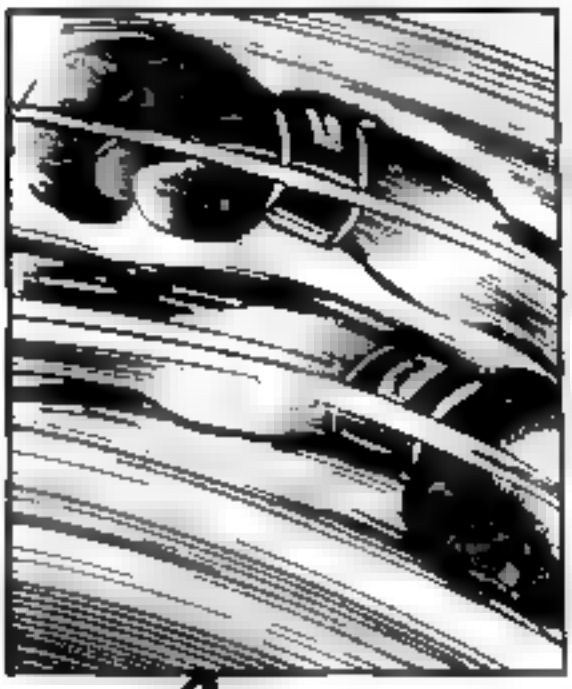
WE'LL BE ABLE TO SEE WHAT KIND OF A BOXER JOE TRULY IS...!

IT ALMOST APPEARS AS IF HE'S ENJOYING THINKING ABOUT WHERE TO ATTACK NEXT..!

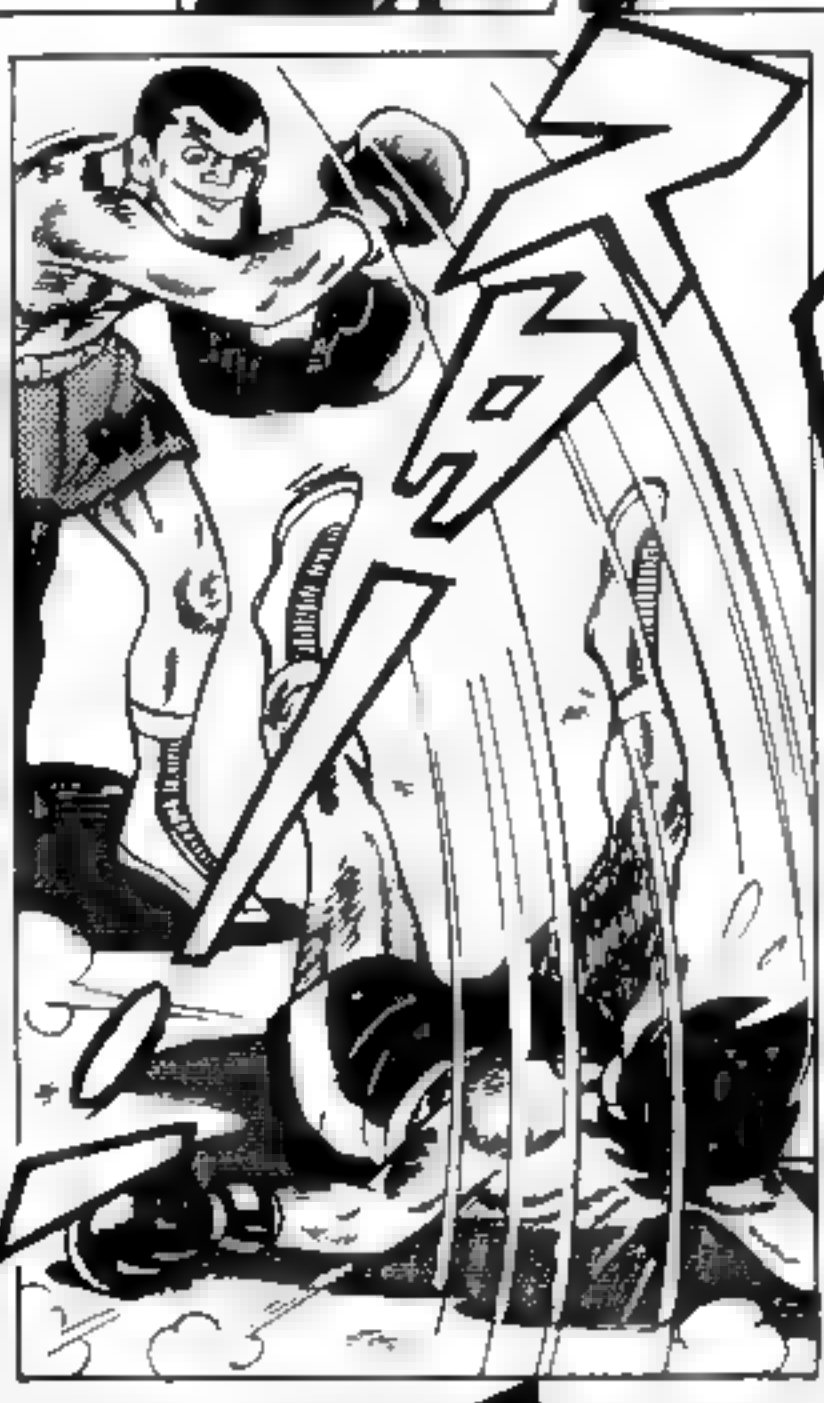
HE DOESN'T ATTACK JUST YET...!

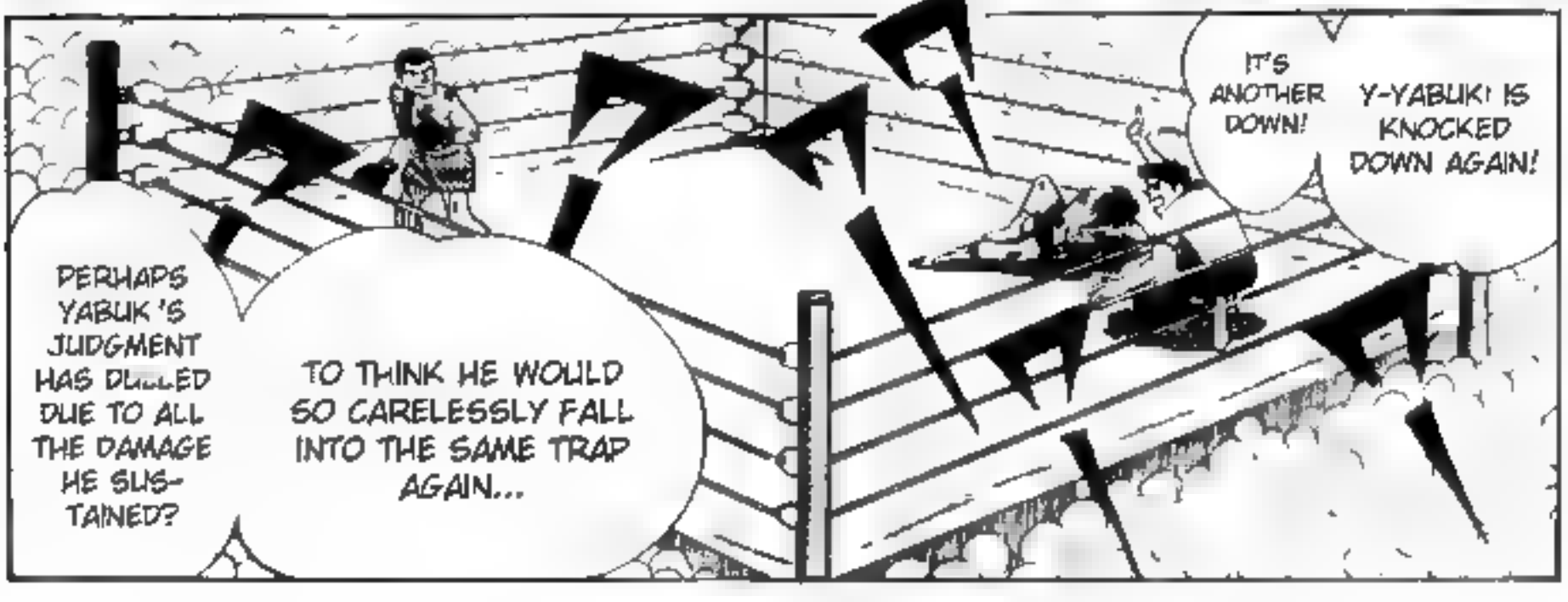
WOLF SLOWLY CIRCLES AROUND JOE...

SHALL I GIVE YOU ANOTHER LEFT STRAIGHT ..?
NOW THEN,
I THINK I WILL...!
HEH HEH



AHH, AGAIN!
HE COUNTERED JOE'S CROSS COUNTER AGAIN!




PERHAPS YABUK'S JUDGMENT HAS DULLED DUE TO ALL THE DAMAGE HE SUSTAINED?
TO THINK HE WOULD SO CARELESSLY FALL INTO THE SAME TRAP AGAIN...
IT'S ANOTHER DOWN!
Y-YABUK! IS KNOCKED DOWN AGAIN!

HOW CAN HE STILL STAND?

WHAT THE

THE FIGHT RESUMES ONCE MORE!

スレ

HERE

FINE THEN, TIME FOR ANOTHER LEFT STRAIGHT

SOMEHOW, HE FINDS A WAY TO GET BACK UP!

YABUK STANDS!

AHH!

COME!

IT'S A SLAUGHTER!

T-THIS IS NO MERE FIGHT ANYMORE...

THAT'S HIS 2ND DOWN THIS ROUND ALONE!

YABUKI'S DOWN AGAIN!

B-BACK TO YOUR CORNER!

UGH.

6!

5!

7!

HEH

ｺﾞｸﾘ

...

FIGHT!

WHAT?

THE WISE DECISION WOULD BE TO THROW IN THE TOWEL!

CLUB OWNER TANGE MERELY CONTINUES TO SILENTLY WATCH BY...!

N-NO ...

JOE'S GONNA BE KILLED AT THIS RATE!

STOP THE MATCH!

REF! YOU'RE NOT SERIOUSLY GONNA LET THIS FIGHT CONTINUE, ARE YOU!?

THOSE ARE EYES THAT SAY HE WON'T GO DOWN UNTIL THE VERY END!

EVEN UNDER HIS SWOLLEN EYELIDS, HIS EYES ARE STILL GLEAMING WITH A CERTAIN LIGHT!

TAKE A LOOK AT YABUKI'S EYES...!

HURRY UP AND FINISH HIM OFF ALREADY!

WOLF! WHAT'RE YOU JUST STANDING AROUND FOR!?

HIS DETERMINED LOOK ALONE MAKES IT SEEM AS IF THE FIGHT HAS ONLY JUST BEGUN!

HIS EYES ALONE ARE THE SAME AS WHEN HE FIRST STEPPED ONTO THE RING!

EVEN THOUGH THE REST OF HIS BODY IS BRUISED AND BLEEDING,

はあ はあ

ALL IN ORDER TO SHOW YOU THAT YOU'RE BEAT THROUGH AND THROUGH! YOU DON'T HAVE A CHANCE IN HELL OF WINNING!

I'LL MAKE IT NICE AND PRETTY BY AGAIN CRUSHING YOUR ONLY WEAPON, THE CROSS COUNTER THAT YOU WERE SO PROUD OF...

READY FOR YOUR 3RD AND FINAL KNOCK-DOWN?

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YES, I KNOW...

SLEEP TIGHT!

AH!

ACK!

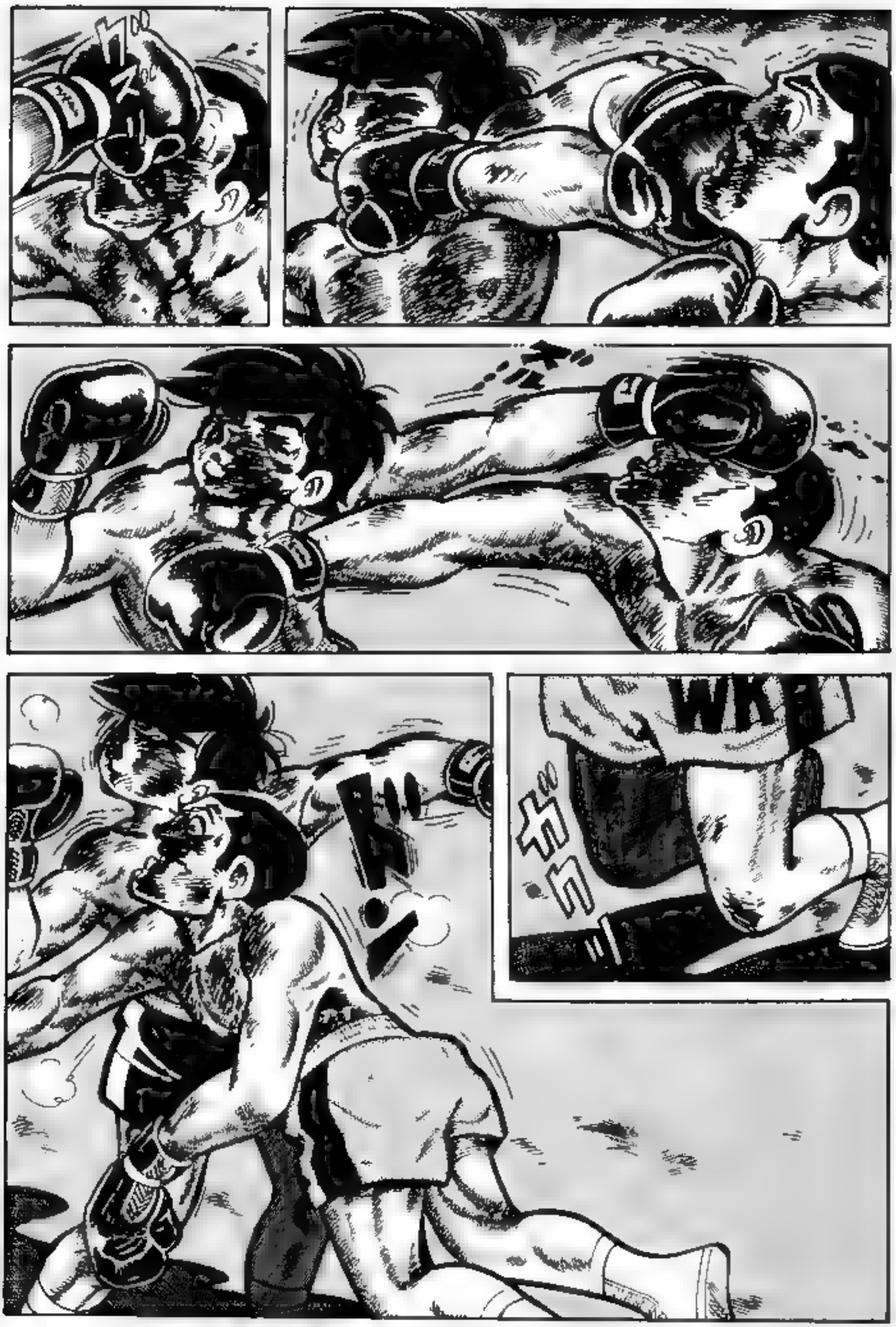
AGHH!

GAHH!

WK

AHH...

AH...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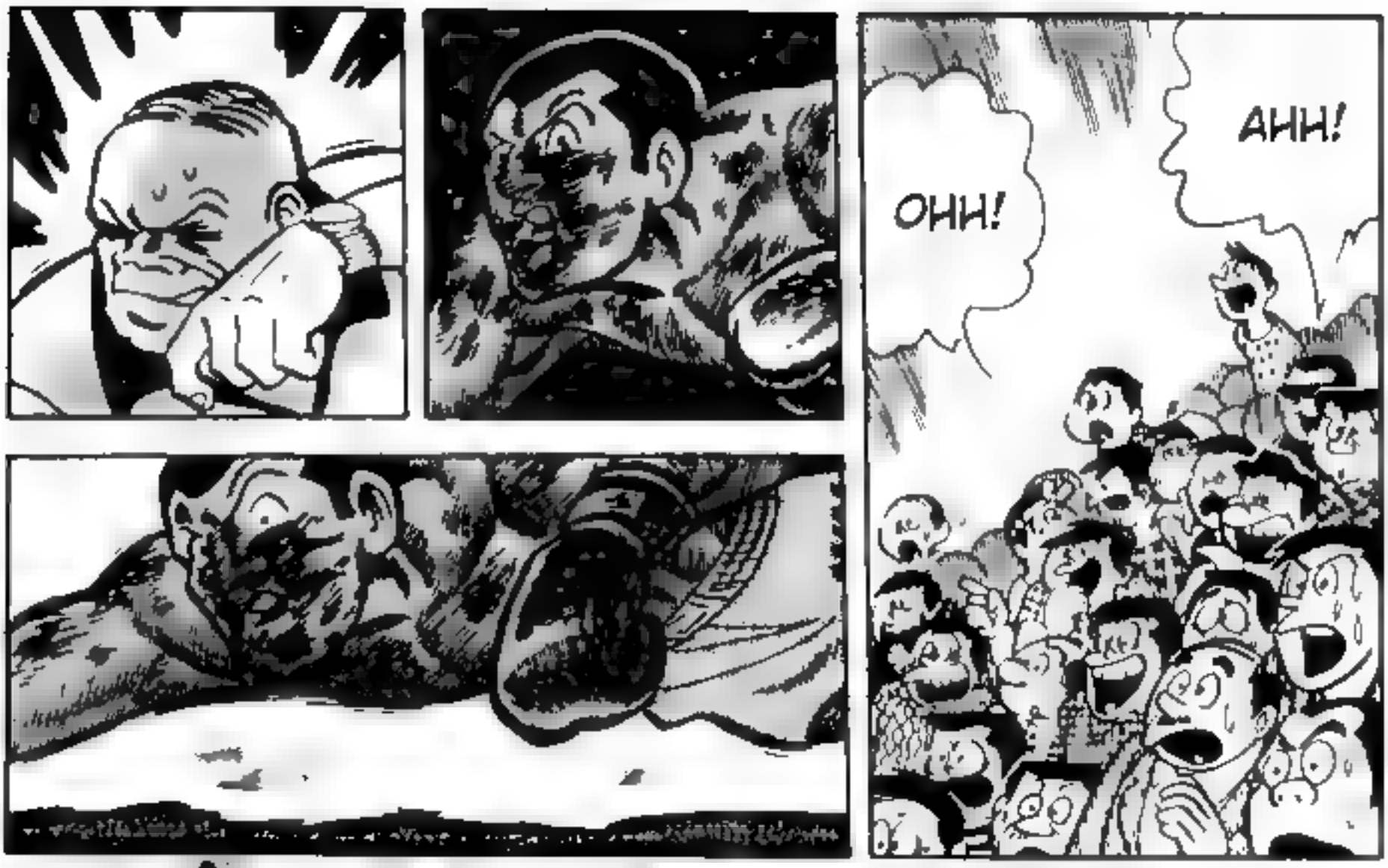
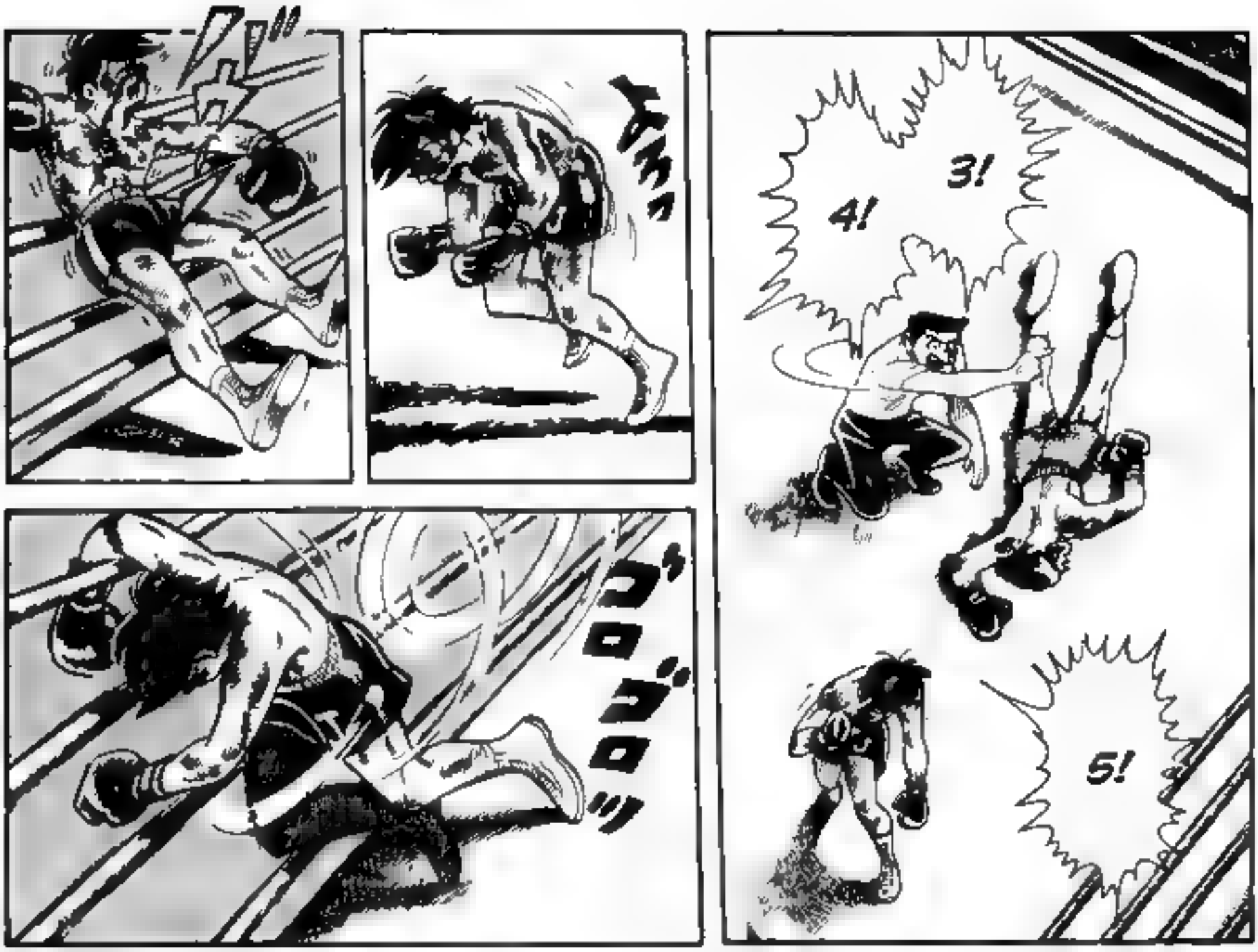

OHH!
AHH!

BACK TO YOUR CORNER!


4!
3!
5!

7!
6!
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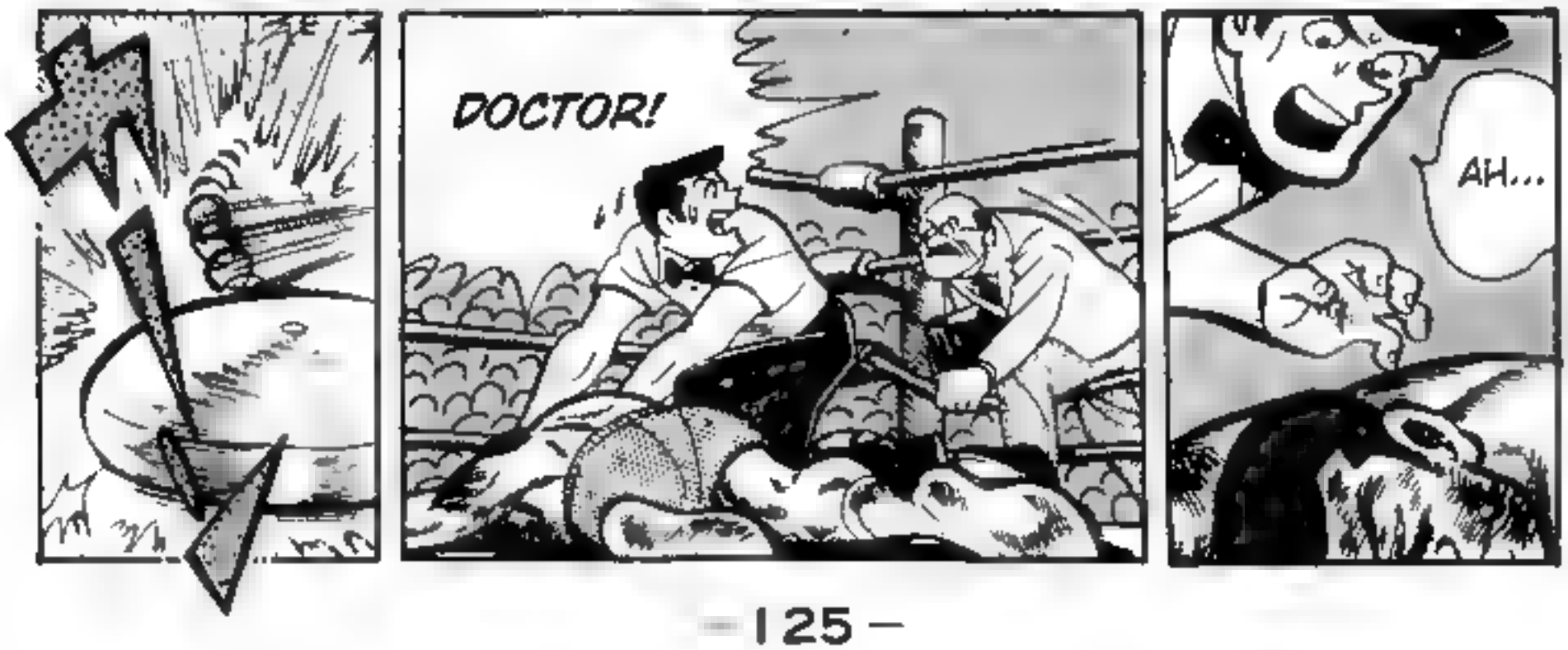
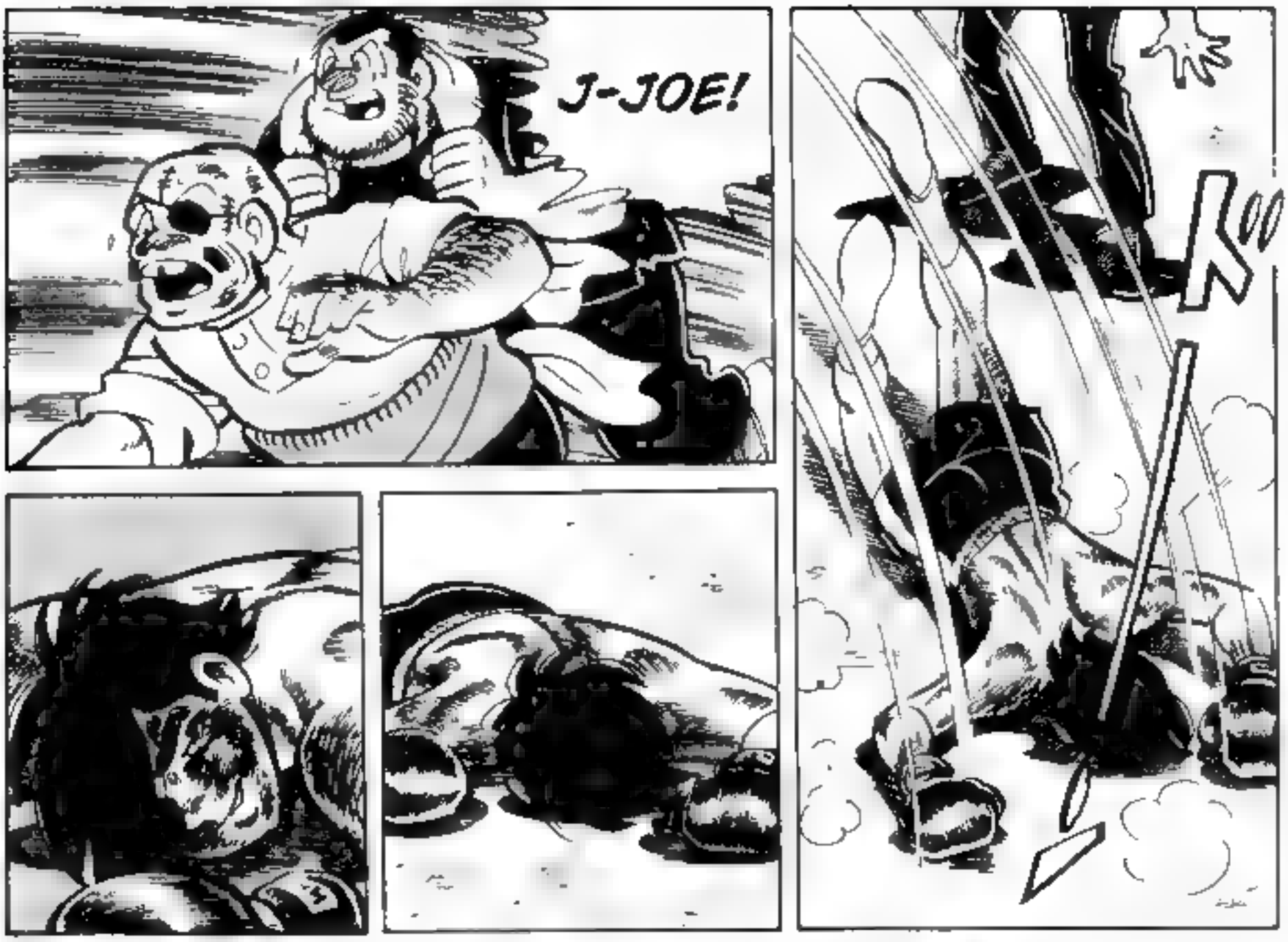

DOCTOR!
AH...

W-WOLF!

YABUKI JOE WINS BY KO!

YABU-


J-JOE!

WOLF! WAKE UP!
WELL DONE, JOE!
CAREFUL! MOVING HIM CARELESSLY WILL BE VERY DANGEROUS!
TURN HIS HEAD DOWN.

THAT IS THE ONLY THING CAN MAKE OUT RIGHT NOW

YABUK COMES FROM BEHIND TO WIN BY KO!

YOU COULD SAY IT WAS A TRIPLE CROSS COUNTER...!

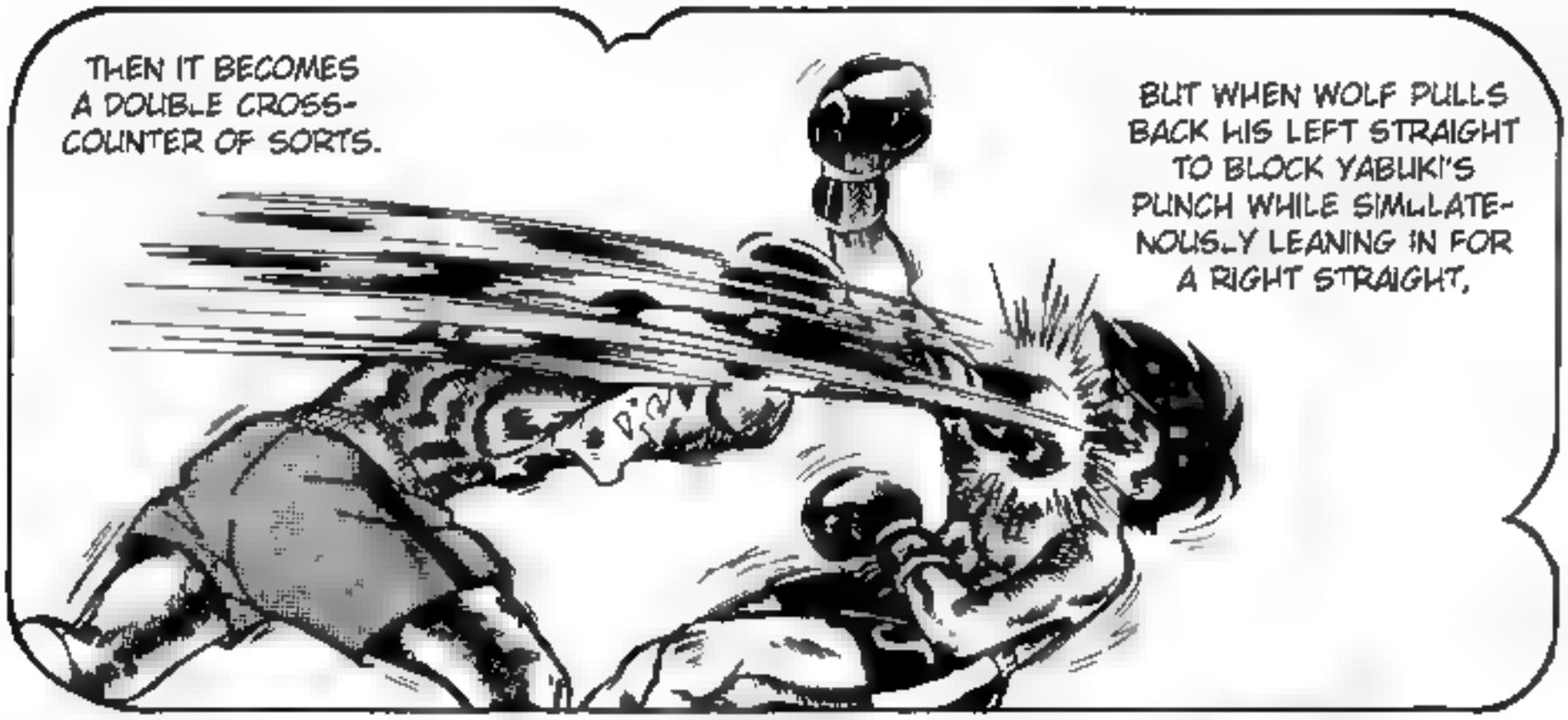
IT WAS.

IT

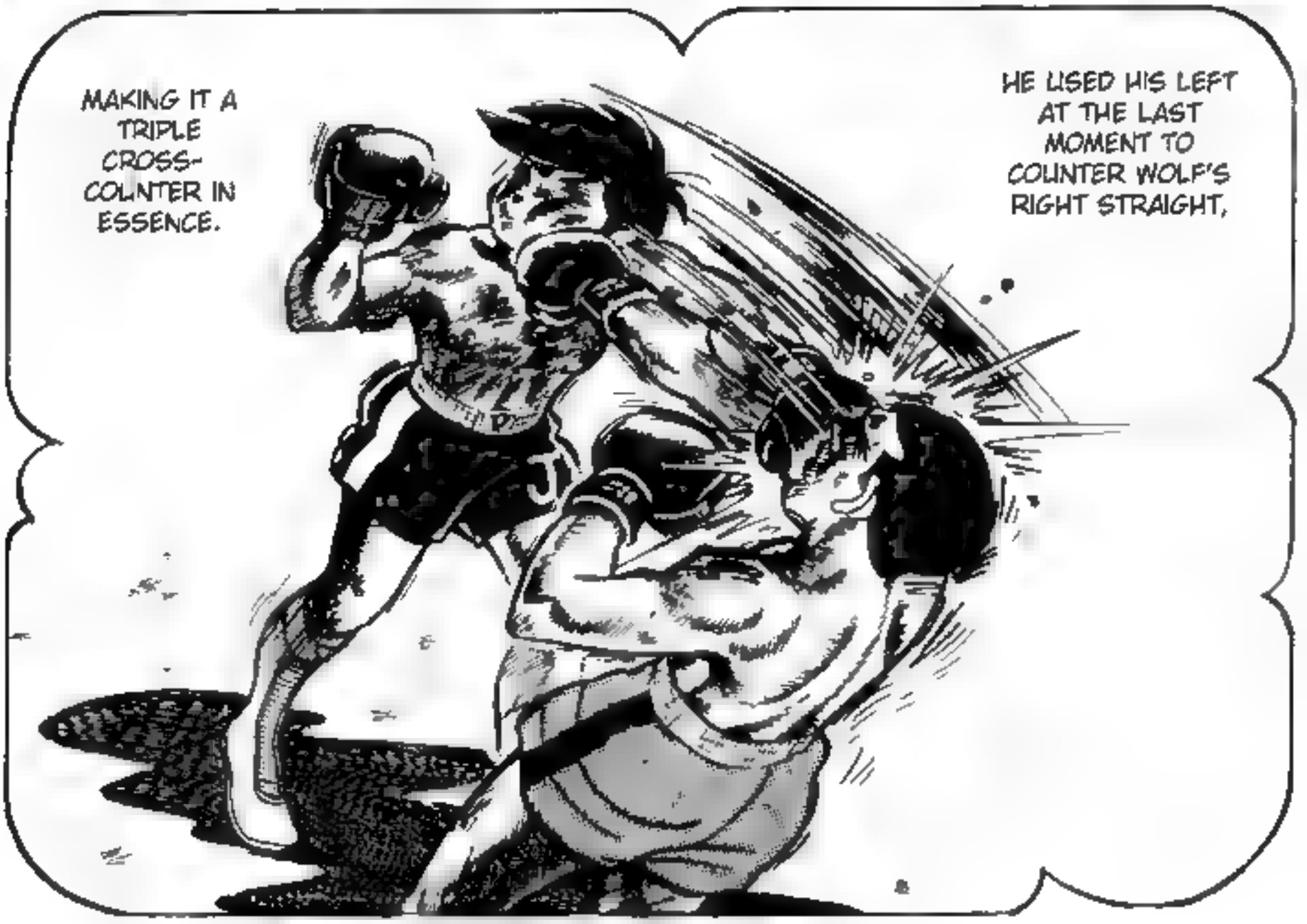
JUST HOW DID HE WIN!?

TRIPLE .?

YES. NORMALLY, YABUKI WOULD CROSS HIS RIGHT OVER WOLF'S LEFT FOR A CROSS-COUNTER.


THEN IT BECOMES A DOUBLE CROSS-COUNTER OF SORTS.
BUT WHEN WOLF PULLS BACK HIS LEFT STRAIGHT TO BLOCK YABUKI'S PUNCH WHILE SIMULTANEOUSLY LEANING IN FOR A RIGHT STRAIGHT,

YES, YABUKI JOE HAS MANAGED A WAY TO COUNTER WOLF'S DOUBLE CROSS-COUNTER.
T-THEN...
I... I SEE..


MAKING IT A TRIPLE CROSS-COUNTER IN ESSENCE.
HE USED HIS LEFT AT THE LAST MOMENT TO COUNTER WOLF'S RIGHT STRAIGHT,

IN WHICH YABUKI JOE HAS EMERGED AS THE VICTOR.

IN ANY CASE, THIS MATCH WAS A BATTLE OF CROSS-COUNTERS,

AND IN TERMS OF DAMAGE,

IF A CROSS COUNTER IS 4 TIMES STRONGER THAN A NORMAL STRAIGHT,

THAN A DOUBLE CROSS COUNTER IS 8 TIMES STRONGER,

AND A TRIPLE CROSS COUNTER MAY BE AS MUCH AS 12 TIMES STRONGER.

HIS TENACITY AND FIGHTING SPIRIT,

THE BRAWLER WHO WAS BORN TO FIGHT, YABUKI JOE.

THE WILD KILLER,

HE HAS PROVEN TO BE MENTALLY SUPERIOR TO HIS OPPONENT ONCE AGAIN

TO RISE UP TO THE CHALLENGE!

HE FACES A TOUGH CHALLENGE, HE GRITS HIS TEETH AND SACRIFICES HIS BODY,

EVERY-TIME,

WAS ABLE TO TRIUMPH OVER WOLF'S REFINED TECHNICAL SKILLS.

I DON'T THINK I'VE EVER EXPERIENCED ANYTHING QUITE LIKE THIS!

IN ALL MY YEARS AS A BOXING COMMENTATOR,

THE BRAWLER WHO DEFIES ALL LOGIC!

THE KILLER WHO MAKES THE IMPOSSIBLE POSSIBLE!

THE WILD BEAST, YABUKI JOE!

HE'S THE REAL THING...

HE'S...

HE'S THE REAL THING...!

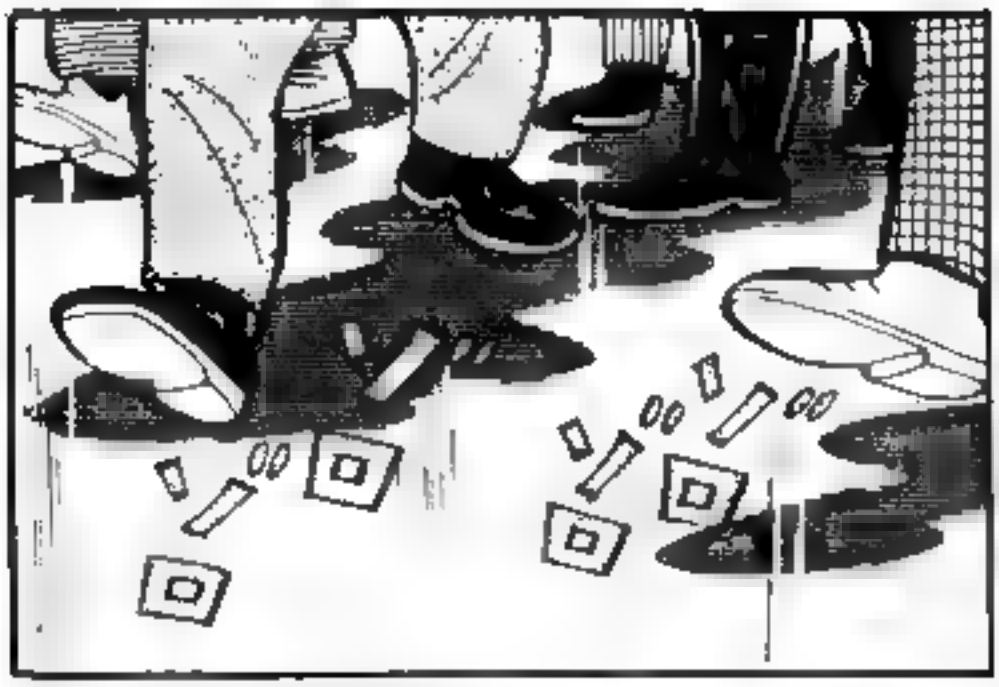
LET ME THROUGH!
M-MOVE IT!

THEN AT LAST, I'LL BE YOUR NEXT MATCH!
IF YOU CAN.

CAN YOU HEAR MY VOICE!?
CAN YOU SEE ME, JOE!?

.....

SBC
SHIRAKI BOXING CLU
WOLF KANAGUSHI'S RETURN UNLIKELY
SEVERELY FRACTURED JAW CAUSES DOCTOR TO RECOMMEND RETIREMENT
WILL RIKIISHI TOORU BE JOE'S NEXT MATCH?



MAN, WHY IS IT SO HOT IN HERE WHEN THE WEATHER OUTSIDE THESE DAYS ARE GETTING COOLER AND COOLER?
MAYBE THEY ALREADY TURNED ON THE HEATER? HAHA...
I WONDER IF RIKIISHI'S IN RIGHT NOW?

THE HECK?
WHAT'S WITH THE HEAT!?
WHOA!

AH!
EXCUSE US, MEDIA COMING THROUGH

IT'S SWEL-TERING IN HERE!
LOOKS LIKE THEY HAVEN'T JUST TURNED ON A HEATER!
W-WHA...
W-WHO'S THAT SHADOW BOXING OVER THERE...?

NOT ONLY THAT, HE'S DRESSED LIKE IT'S THE MIDDLE OF WINTER!

HAS HE LOST IT OR SOME-THING?

I-IT'S RIKIISHI! BUT WHY DID HE TURN UP THE HEAT SO MUCH?

Y-YES. .

YOU'RE LETTING THE HEAT OUT!

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I... I DON'T MIND YOU BEING IN HERE BUT COULD YOU PLEASE CLOSE THE DOOR?

IT WAS BACK WHEN BANTAMWEIGHT BOXER HARADA WAS TRYING TO LOSE WEIGHT FOR AN UPCOMING MATCH...

IS THIS SOME SORT OF SPECIAL ENDURANCE TRAINING?

I DON'T KNOW HOW LONG I CAN KEEP STANDING HERE!

I DON'T THINK SO BECAUSE I'VE HEARD OF A SIMILAR INCIDENT AS THIS.

N-NO,

BECAUSE THAT'S WHERE YABUK JOE IS!

YES, BANTAMWEIGHT

BANTAM-WEIGHT?

RIKISH HAS BEGUN TO SERIOUSLY PREPARE TO LOWER HIS WEIGHT TO ENTER THE BANTAMWEIGHT DIVISION.

AS YOU CAN SEE,

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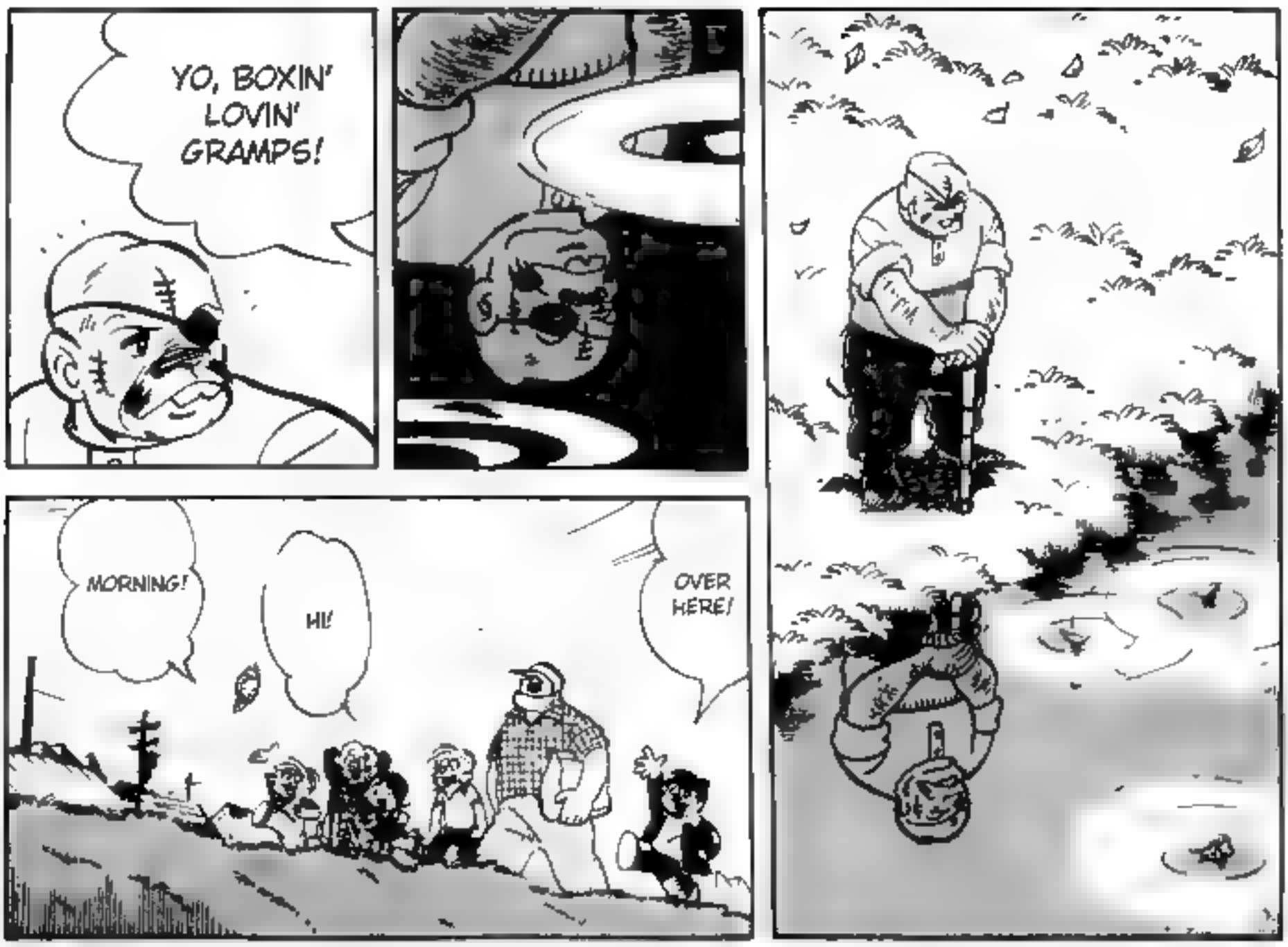
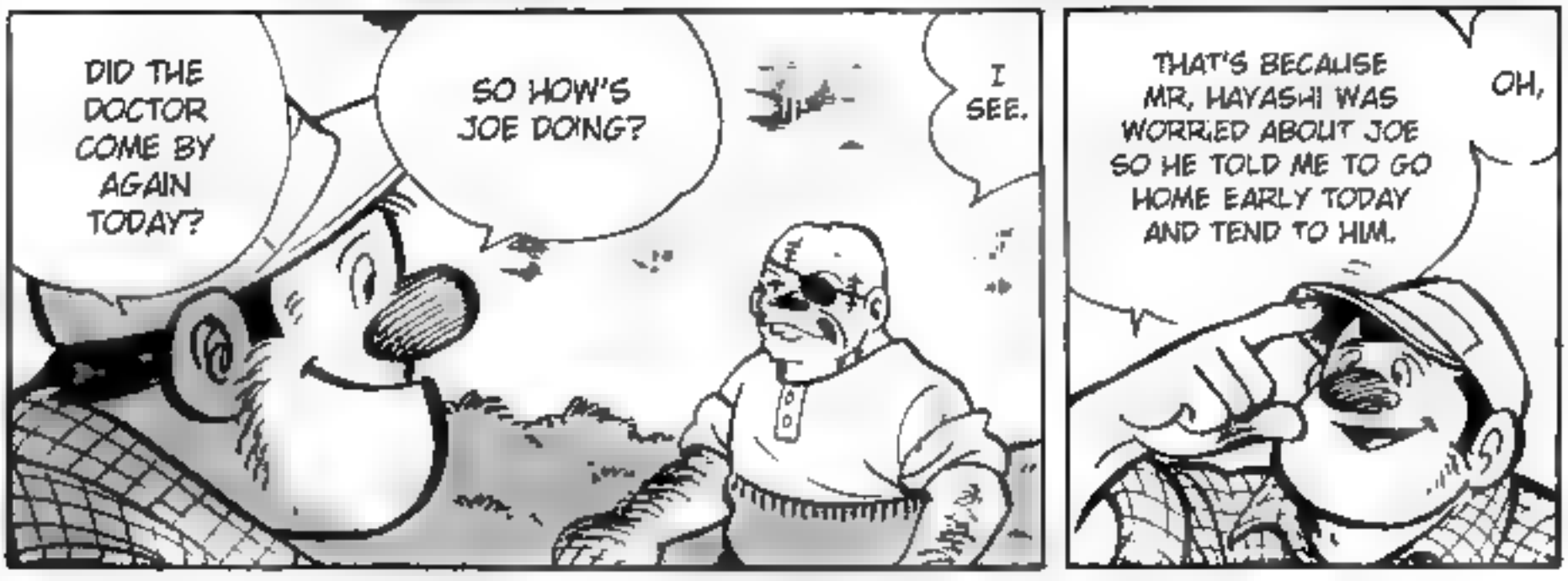

YO, BOXIN' LOVIN' GRAMPS!
MORNING!
HI!
OVER HERE!

HELLO, KIDS.
WHAT'RE YOU DOING OVER THERE?
I'M BACK FROM WORK.
YOU'RE EARLY TODAY, NISHI.


DID THE DOCTOR COME BY AGAIN TODAY?
SO HOW'S JOE DOING?
I SEE.
OH,
THAT'S BECAUSE MR. HAYASHI WAS WORRIED ABOUT JOE SO HE TOLD ME TO GO HOME EARLY TODAY AND TEND TO HIM.

BUT THE DOCTOR FORCED HIM TO GET MORE REST FOR THE TIME BEING.

WELL, IF IT WERE UP TO HIM, HE'D BE OUT RUNNING RIGHT NOW.

IS HE STILL SLEEPING?

SO THEN. HOW IS BROTHER JOE?

YEAH, JUST A LITTLE WHILE AGO.

AT THIS RATE, HIS BODY'LL END UP AS NOTHING BUT A BATTERED PIECE OF JUNK.

IT'S BECAUSE HE ALWAYS FIGHTS SO RECKLESSLY HE GETS SO BEAT UP.

GOOD FOOD?

I BOUGHT SOME GOOD FOOD TO HELP OUT WITH JOE'S RECOVERY.

OH, RIGHT

LET ME SEE

SO ALL THE STORES ARE STOCKED UP ON TONS OF DELICIOUS-LOOKING FOOD.

AS THEY SAY, FALL'S THE SEASON FOR EATING

HM.

THE REST ARE BASICALLY POISON IN DISGUISE

THIS'LL DO SO WILL THAT AND THIS

BESIDES, WITH ALL THE LYING AROUND THAT JOE'S FORCED TO DO, I'M WORRIED HE MIGHT END UP GAINING A COUPLE POUNDS.

NISHI, IF YOU CALL YOURSELF A PROFESSIONAL BOXER, THEN YOU SHOULD KNOW BETTER THAN TO BUY SNACKS THAT'LL ONLY TEMPT YOU INTO GAINING WEIGHT.

MAMMOTH NISHI SAVED UP QUITE A BIT TO BUY ALL THAT FOR JOE!

W-WHAT WAS THAT FOR!?

AND YOU SHOULD BE AWARE OF THE FACT THAT YOUR NEXT FIGHT WILL BE ARRANGED IN THE NEAR FUTURE.

EVERYTHING ELSE IS UNNECES-SARY.

THE ONLY TWO THINGS A BOXER NEEDS TO RECOVER ARE FOODS WITH ESSENTIAL NUTRIENTS AND TIME

KEEP ON TALKING ABOUT FOOD AND YOU'LL FIND IT EVEN HARDER TO LOSE WEIGHT.

...

IT'S FINE.

THAT'S RIGHT!

HE DIDN'T HAVE TO THROW IT AWAY IN THE RIVER LIKE THAT!

HOW COULD HE BE SO COLD!?

NOW LET'S GO IN.

O-OK...

THE OLD MAN JUST DOESN'T WANT ME AND JOE TO SUFFER TOO MUCH WHEN IT'S TIME TO SLIM DOWN.

IT'S MY FAULT FOR BEING SO THOUGHT-LESS.

YES.

AND EVEN IF HE SAYS HE WANTS MORE, DON'T GIVE HIM A SINGLE MORSEL MORE. UNDERSTAND?

I'VE PREPARED ALL THE INGREDIENTS IN THE KITCHEN SO BE SURE TO GIVE JOE HIS MEAL ONCE IT'S 6 O'CLOCK.

I'LL BE GOING TO WORK NOW.

AND BE SURE TO WEIGH YOURSELF BEFORE AND AFTER PRACTICE

TRAIN HARD WHILE I'M OUT, NISH!

IF I WERE TO DO THAT, THEN WHO WOULD WATCH OVER JOE WHILE I'M GONE?

IT'D BE NICE IF YOU COULD WORK DURING THE DAY..

IT...

BYE!

GOT IT.

ALRIGHT BUT JUST BE QUIET

IS BROTHER JOE SLEEPING?

IT'S AWFULLY QUIET UPSTAIRS...

YOU GOT IT!

HEH HEH

WOULD IT BE ALRIGHT IF WE GO UP TO TAKE A PEEK?

ARE YOU THERE?

SSH!

HE'S SOUNDLY SLEEPING

BORING...

EVEN IF WE DO GET PAID TO FIGHT, 4 OR 6-ROUNDERS CAN'T BRING IN MUCH MONEY.

DON'T BE STUPID.

YEAH, AREN'T YOU AND JOE PRO-BOXERS NOW? IT'D BE NICE IF YOU COULD JUST FOCUS ON TRAINING AND NOT HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT MONEY.

BUT WHY DO YOU, JOE, AND THE OLD MAN HAVE TO WORK ALL THE TIME?

BUT AS THINGS ARE RIGHT NOW, WE'RE NOTHING BUT A COUPLE OF SMALL TIMERS THAT NEED TO WORK DAYJOBS TO SUPPORT OURSELVES.

IF WE WERE POPULAR RANKED FIGHTERS FIGHTING FOR THE CHAMPIONSHIP TITLE, THINGS WOULD BE DIFFERENT.

IT'S TOUGH BUT THAT'S JUST HOW IT IS.

AT MOST, IT'S ONLY ONCE A MONTH.

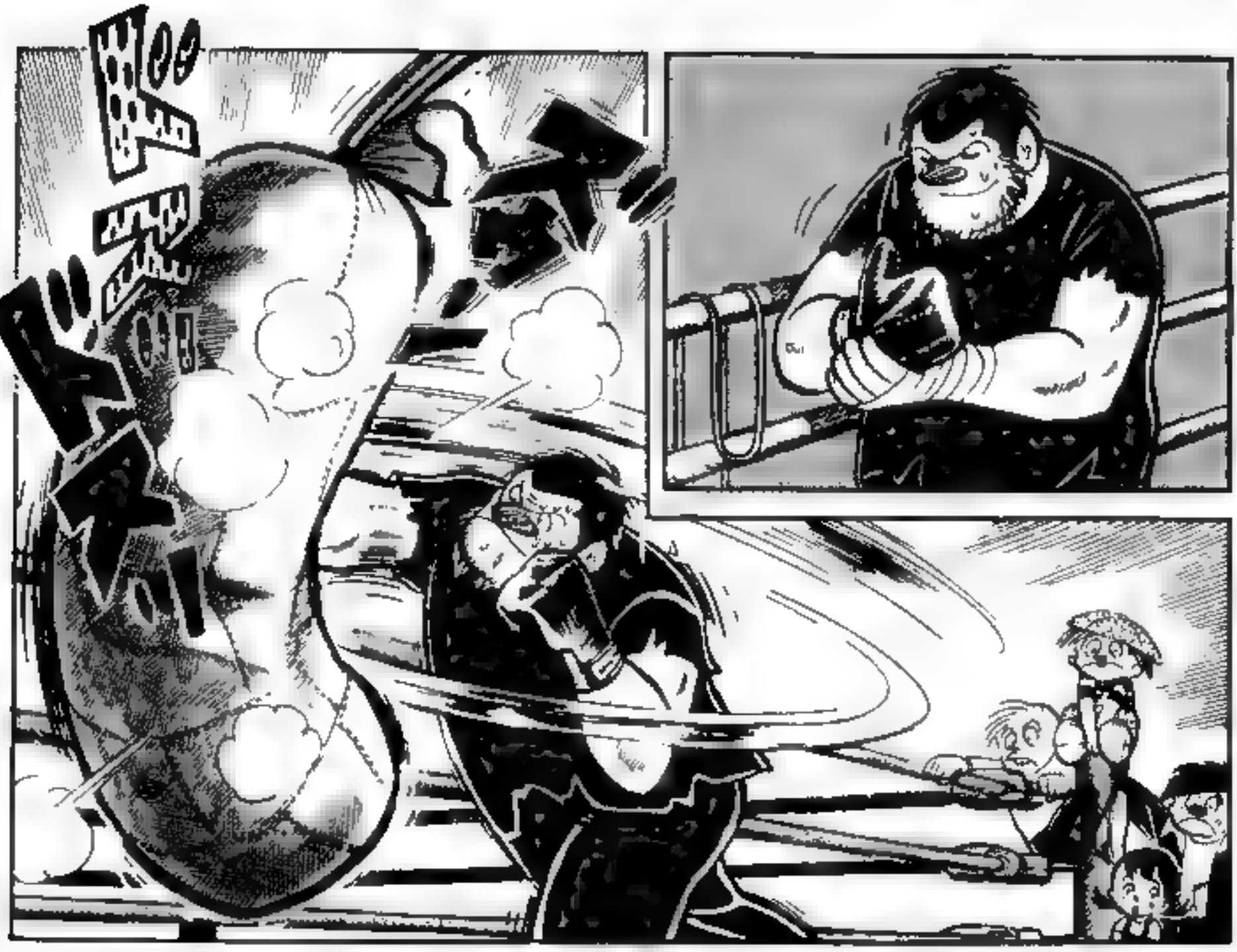
AND IT'S NOT LIKE WE FIGHT EVERYDAY EITHER.

HM...

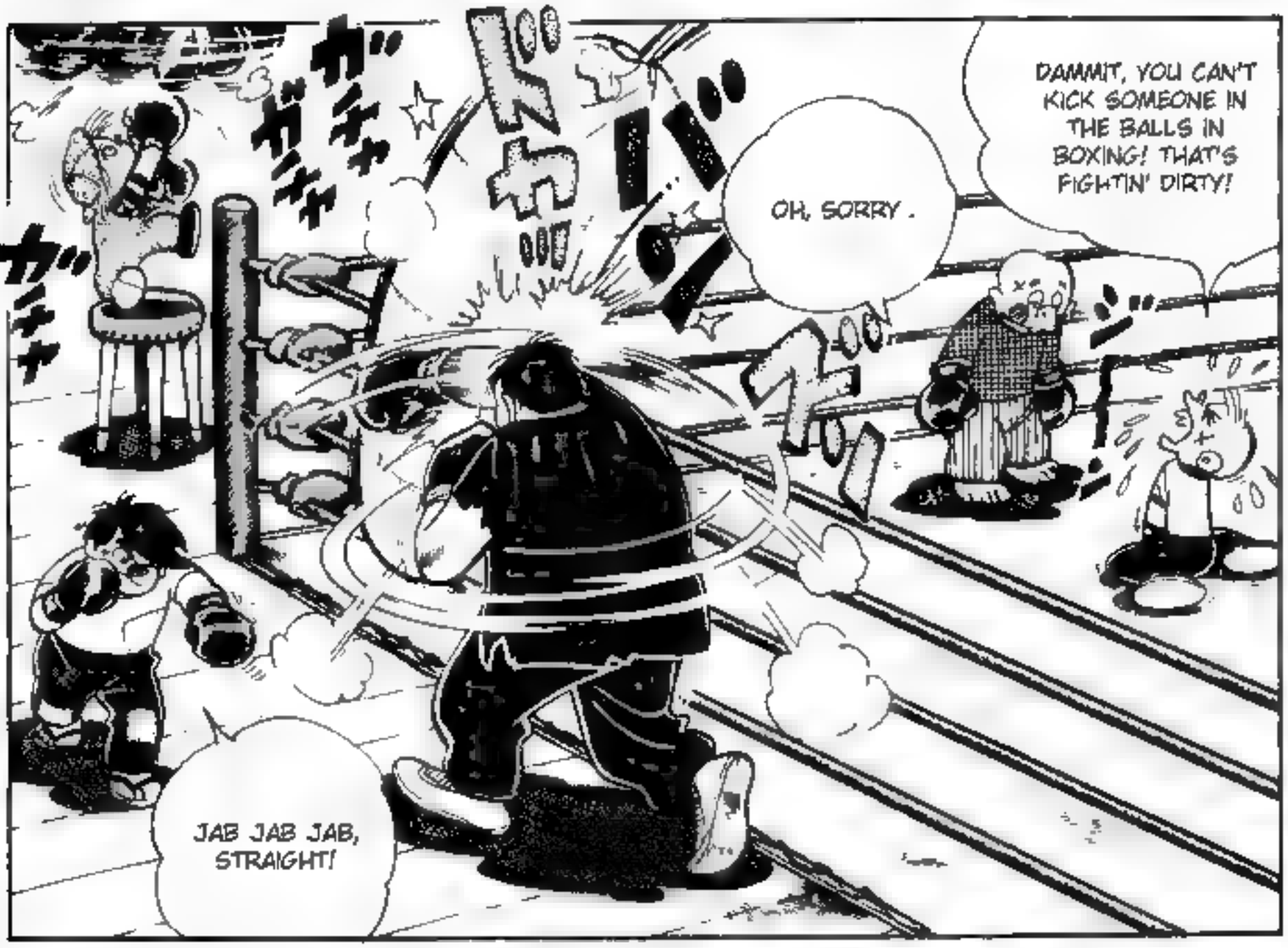
WE'VE STILL GOT A LONG WAY UP TO GO IN THIS WORLD OF PROFESSIONAL BOXING.

YUP, WE'VE BARELY JUST HATCHED FROM OUR EGGS

YOU AND BROTHER JOE ARE STILL ONLY SMALL FRIES?

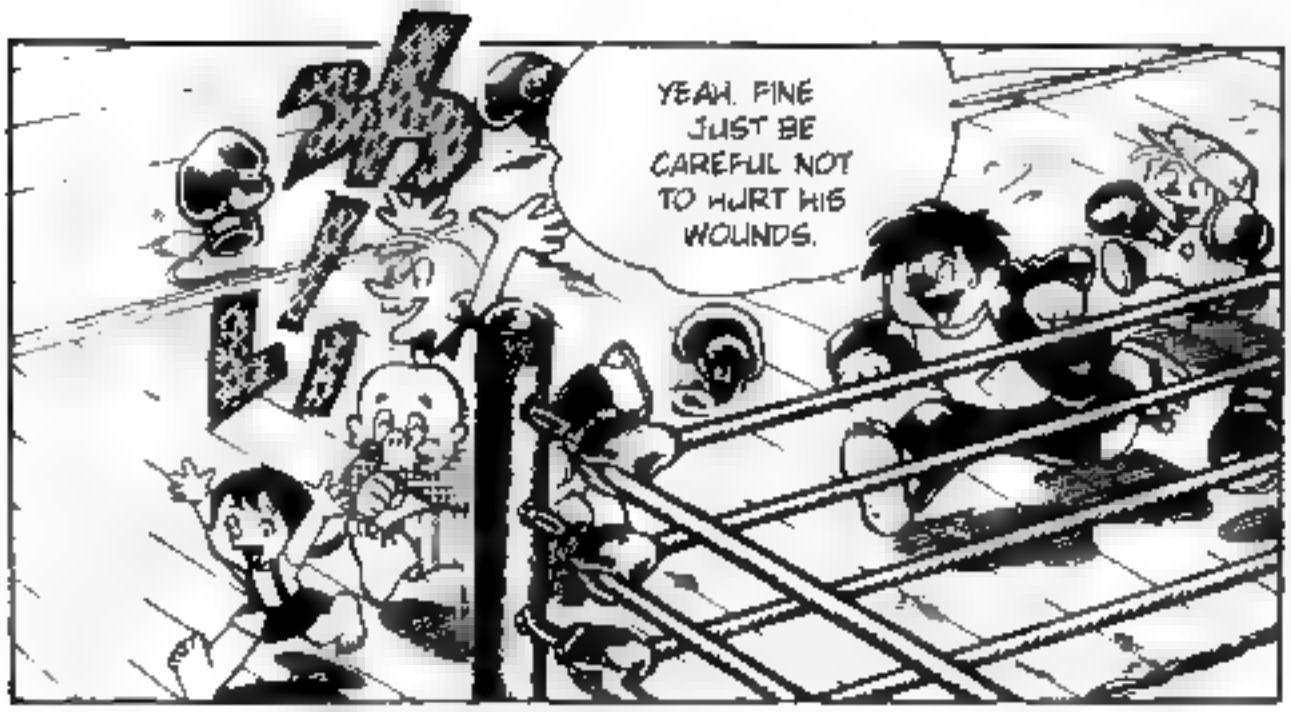

SURE.
YOU WANNA SPAR WITH ME, TONKICHI?
SOUNDS GOOD TO ME!
I'M GONNA DO THE JUMPING ROPES!
IT BEATS STANDING HERE AND WATCHING ALL DAY.
GUYS, WHY DON'T WE TRAIN A LIL' BIT TOO?
I'M GONNA USE JOE'S TRADE-MARK NO-GUARD STANCE!
ME TOO!
DRESSED IN YELLOW~
CINDE-RELLA~
WENT UPSTAIRS TO KISS A FELLA~

♪
TRIPLE CROSS COUNTER!
DOUBLE CROSS COUNTER!
CROSS COUNTER!


JAB JAB JAB, STRAIGHT!
OH, SORRY.
DAMMIT, YOU CAN'T KICK SOMEONE IN THE BALLS IN BOXING! THAT'S FIGHTIN' DIRTY!

YOU'RE UP, YOU'RE UP!
AH! BROTHER JOE!

WOULD IT KILL YA KIDS TO KEEP IT DOWN? I'M STILL TRYING TO RECOVER Y'KNOW!


YEAH. FINE JUST BE CAREFUL NOT TO HURT HIS WOUNDS.

HEY, HEY, MAMMOTH NISHI! CAN WE GO PLAY WITH HIM NOW THAT HE'S AWAKE?

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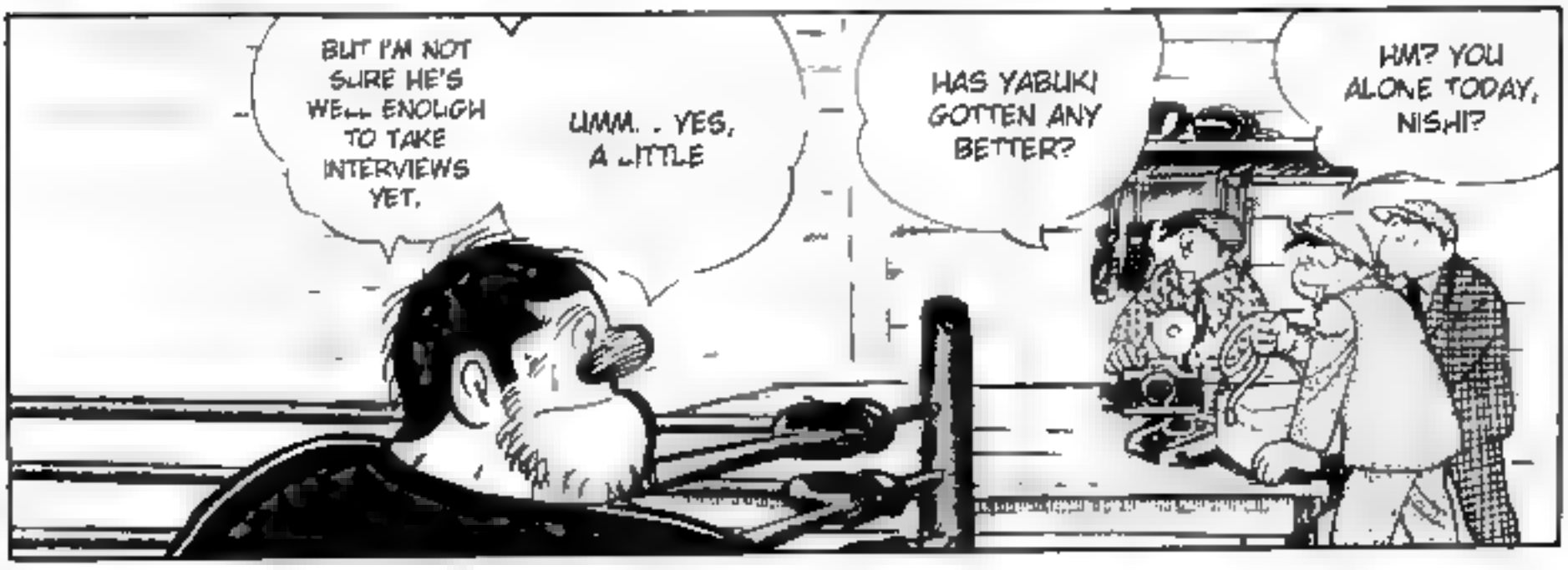
GOOD DAY.
WE'VE COME FOR AN INTER-VIEW


BUT I'M NOT SURE HE'S WELL ENOUGH TO TAKE INTERVIEWS YET.
UMM. . YES, A LITTLE
HAS YABUKI GOTTEN ANY BETTER?
HM? YOU ALONE TODAY, NISHI?

AFTER ALL, MY RECORD IS A MEDIOCRE 2-3-1 UNLIKE JOE'S...
YEAH, THAT'S TRUE...

OH PLEASE NO OFFENSE BUT WE CAN'T REALLY SELL PAPERS WITH AN EXCLU-SIVE INTERVIEW WITH NISHI.
I'VE GOT A MATCH COMING UP...
YOU COULD INTERVIEW ME INSTEAD IF YOU LIKE

DON'T YOU THINK YOU SHOULD BE GETTING MORE REST?

JOE.

AREN'T YOU GONNA PLAY WITH US, BROTHER JOE?

YEAH, C'MON! PLAY WITH US!

HOW'S WOLF DOING?

SO, HOW'S WOLF DOING?

SPARE THE DOCTOR-TALK THESE WOUNDS ARE NOTHING

SORRY BUT LATER.

LONG TIME NO SEE, YABUKI.

OH SO YOU'RE UP.

WITH THE WAY YOU SMASHED THAT JAW OF HIS..

HE WAS ASIA GYM'S POSTER BOY AND ALL BUT .

RE...?

RETIRED.

HE...

YEAH, I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU MANAGED TO STILL STAND UP AFTER TAKING WOLF'S COUNTERS.

IN ANY CASE, THAT MATCH BETWEEN YOU TWO WAS SOMETHING!

B-BUT,

YEAH, YEAH

AND IT WASN'T JUST YOU ALONE, BUT NISHI AND CLUB OWNER TANGE AS WE....

FOR ONE, WHAT WAS THE REASON FOR THAT BRUISED BODY OF YOURS ANYWAYS?

BUT THERE ARE STILL SOME THINGS ABOUT THAT MATCH THAT I CAN'T QUITE WRAP MY HEAD AROUND.

IT'S EMBARRASSING TO ADMIT BUT BECAUSE OF OUR OUTDATED GYM AND HAVING ONLY 3 PEOPLE, WE GET INJURED PRETTY EASILY WHEN WE SPAR SERIOUSLY

MR. OOTAKA ACTUALLY GUESSED RIGHT DURING JOE'S MATCH.

HAHA, THERE'S NO REAL SPECIAL MEANING BEHIND THAT.

ALL WE REALLY DID WAS PREPARE A STRATEGY TO COUNTER WOLF'S NEW ATTACK

HAHA... ASIA GYM MAY HAVE GONE THROUGH ALL THAT SECRECY, BUT A SINGLE SLIP-UP FROM WOLF ENDED UP GIVING IT ALL AWAY.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY THAT?

A SLIP-UP FROM WOLF?

YOU GUYS DID SOME SPECIAL TRAINING OF YOURS AT THE LAST MINUTE. YOU EVEN FORBID ALL OUTSIDERS LIKE ASIA GYM.

AFTER YOU HEARD ABOUT WOLF'S TRAINING,

THEN... WHAT ABOUT THAT SPECIAL TRAINING OF YOURS?

SO THEN... THEY SAW WOLF'S SPECIAL TRAINING?

WHAT!? THEY MANAGED TO SNEAK IN EVEN WITH ALL THOSE GUARDS?

IT SEEMS THEY WENT TO GO SPY OUT ASIA GYM.

THE KEY TO SOLVING WOLF WAS THOSE KIDS.

HEH

HEH HEH

AND AS A RESULT, WOLF BEAT UP ALL OF THEM AS A PUNISHMENT.

UNFORTUNATELY NO. THEY SNUCK IN BUT WERE CAUGHT INSIDE

TANGE EXAMINED THEIR WOUNDS CLOSELY WITH THE DOCTOR.

AFTER WE TOOK THE WOUNDED KIDS OVER TO THE HOSPITAL,

BUT THAT WAS WOLF'S MISTAKE.

HAHAHA... AND TO MY SURPRISE, THE OLD MAN'S PREDICTIONS WERE SPOT ON AS I WAS FIGHTING WOLF.

TANGE REALIZED THAT AND MANAGED TO FIGURE OUT WHAT WOLF WAS TRAINING BY READING WHERE MOST OF THE BRUISES WERE CONCENTRATED ON THE KIDS' BODIES AND HOW SEVERE THE DAMAGE WAS.

IT MIGHT'VE SEEMED LIKE AN ORDINARY BEATING, BUT AFTER TRAINING NIGHT AND DAY, WOLF BEAT THOSE KIDS IN THE SAME WAY HE HAD BEEN PLANNING TO BEAT ME

EVEN THOUGH THEY WOULD USUALLY SCREAM THEIR HEADS OFF AT ME.

AND THAT'S WHY BOTH NISHI AND THE OLD MAN STAYED SO SILENT THROUGHOUT THE MATCH.

NOW THAT YOU MENTION IT.

YEAH. I MEAN, NEAR THE END, YOU LET YOURSELF GET HIT BY WOLF'S COUNTER NOT ONCE BUT THREE TIMES.

BUT IF TANGE'S PREDICTIONS WERE CORRECT, WHY DID YOU LET YOURSELF GET HIT SO MUCH?

WHAT'S THE MEANING BEHIND THAT?

I NEEDED TO HAVE THE RIGHT TIMING AND THAT WAS REAL TOUGH.

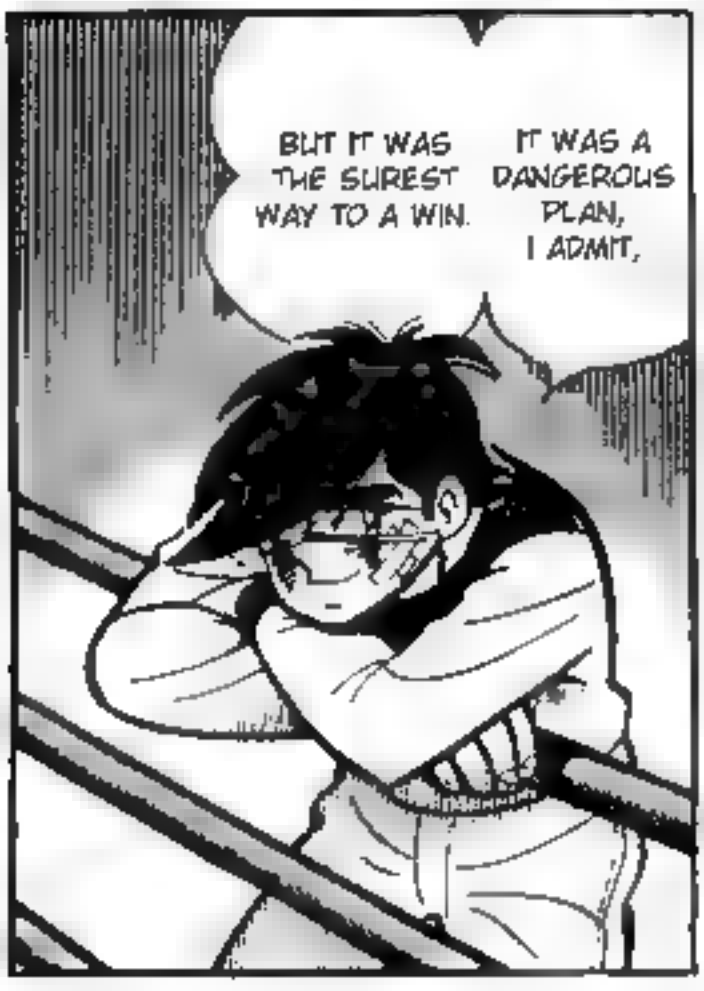
TO BEAT WOLF'S COUNTER.

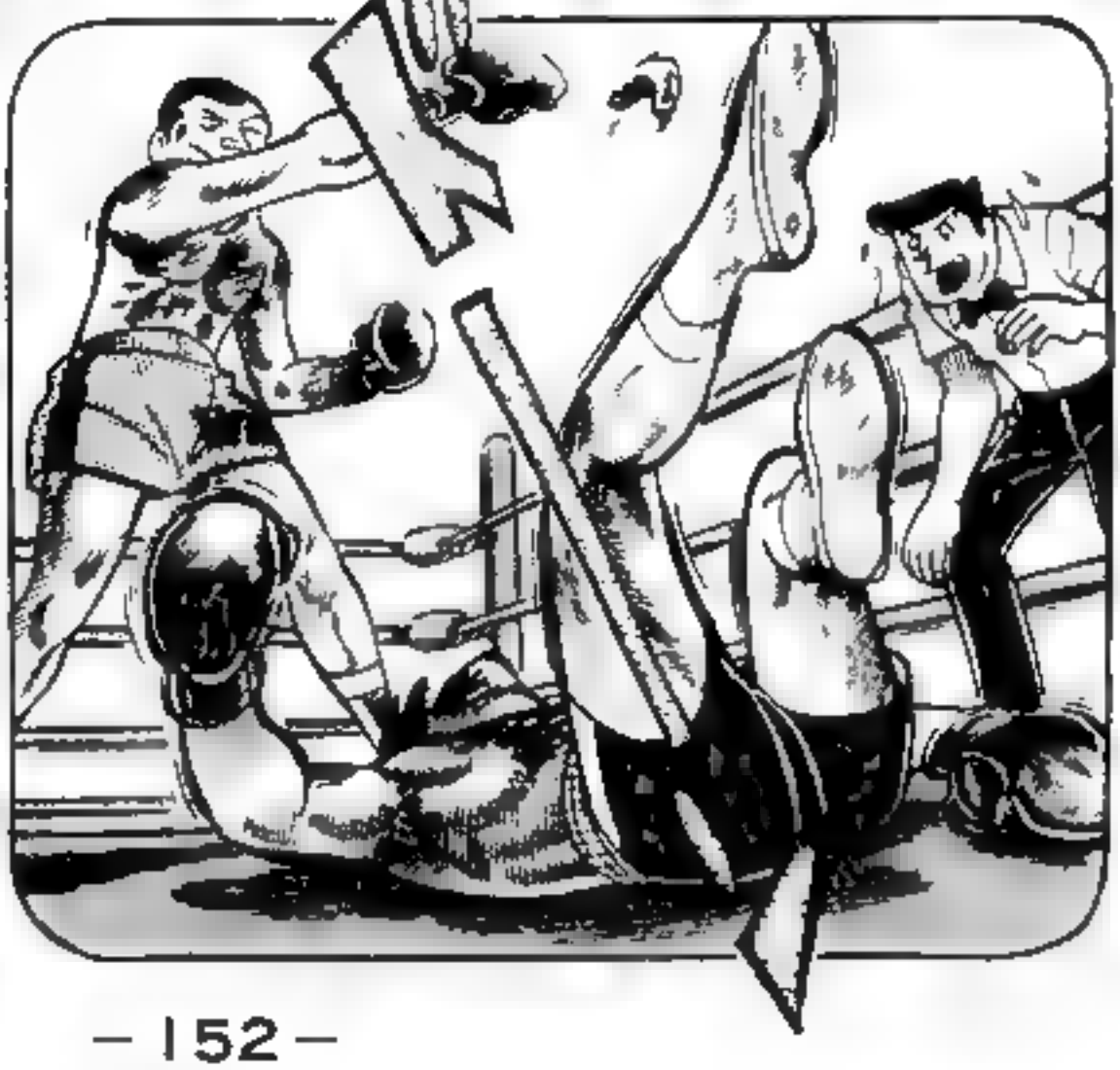
WELL, PREDICTING YOUR ENEMY IS ONE THING AND EXECUTING YOUR STRATEGY IS ANOTHER.

1..
THE ONLY WAY COULD GET THE PERFECT TIMING WAS BY COUNTING WITH MY BREATHS AS RECEIVED HIS PUNCHES HEAD-ON.

2...

3!


BUT IT WAS THE SUREST WAY TO A WIN.
IT WAS A DANGEROUS PLAN, I ADMIT,


K

AND YET I ENDED UP INSULTING HIM...

YEAH, TANGE'S QUITE THE IMPRESSIVE MAN.

WOW..

TO THINK ONE COULD FIGURE OUT AN OPPONENT'S STRATEGY BY EXAMINING WOUNDS..

I SEE...

AN INTER-VIEW, OF COURSE.

WHAT DID YOU REALLY COME HERE FOR?

WE... THAT'S ENOUGH ABOUT THAT.

HM...

YES, BASI-CALLY.

YOU MEAN TO ASK ABOUT ME FIGHTING RIKIISHI?

FOR THE TIME BEING, I HAVE TO FOCUS ON GETTING WELL ENOUGH TO EVEN PRACTICE.

AS YOU CAN SEE, MY ENTIRE BODY'S COVERED WITH CUTS AND BRUISES.

SORRY TO SAY BUT I'M IN NO SHAPE TO FIGHT

HE TRAINS NIGHT AND DAY WEARING ALL THAT THICK CLOTHING AND TURNING ON EVERY STOVE AND HEATER AVAILABLE.

YEAH, I WAS SHOCKED TOO WHEN I WENT OVER TO SHIRAKI GYM RECENTLY.

HE SURE LOST A LOT OF WEIGHT

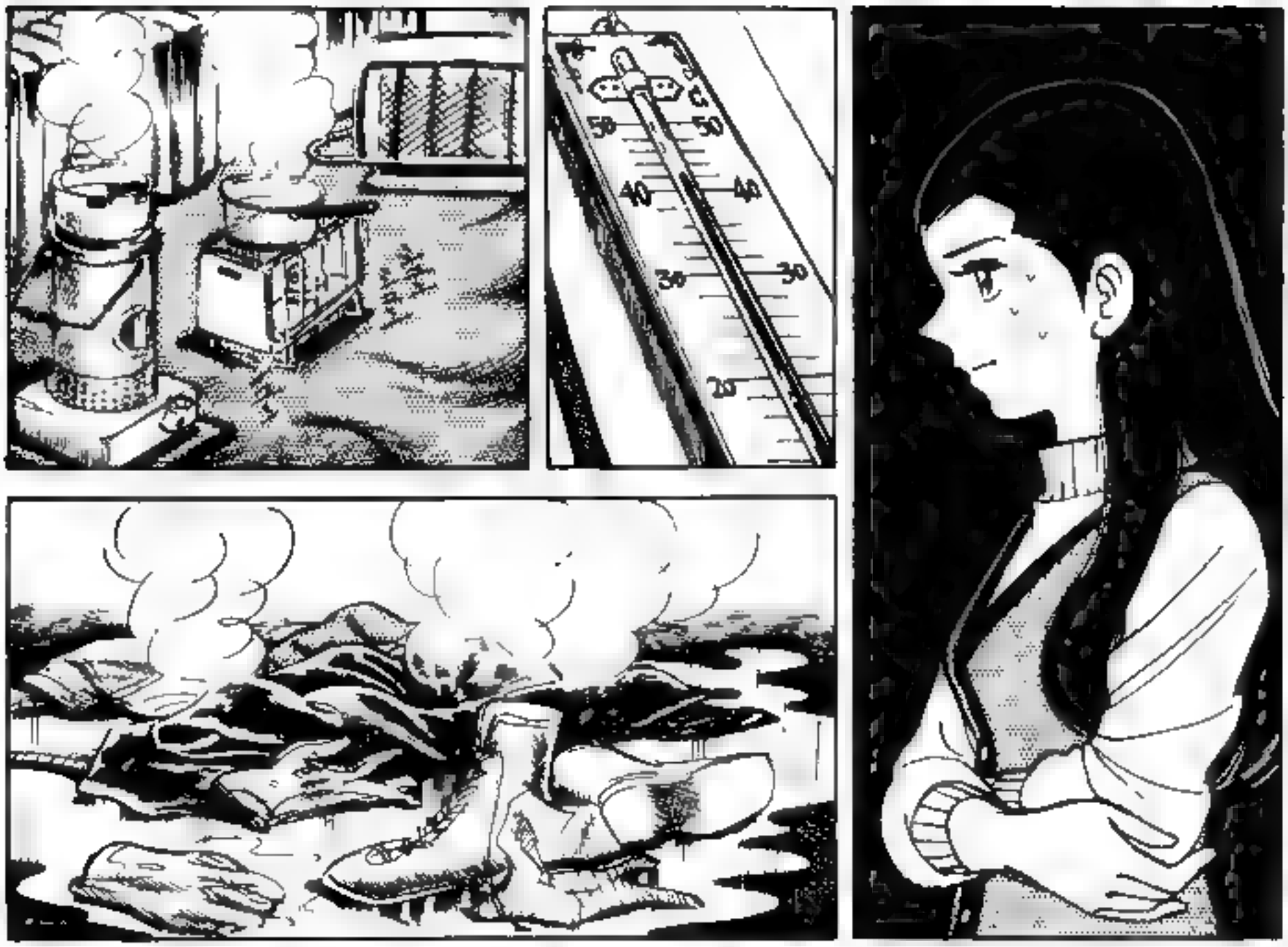
AH, ABOUT RIKIISHI...

BUT HE'S SERIOUSLY TRYING TO MAKE IT INTO THE BANTAMWEIGHT CLASS, THAT'S 3 CLASSES BELOW!

NO KIDDING. HE DOESN'T EVEN HAVE TO TRY TO GAIN ENOUGH WEIGHT TO ENTER THE WELTERWEIGHT CLASSES.

I HEAR HIS SECONDS ARE WORRIED HE MIGHT DRY UP INTO A MUMMY AT THIS RATE.

I CAN UNDERSTAND IF HE WANTED TO LOSE ENOUGH WEIGHT TO ENTER THE LIGHTWEIGHT CLASS BUT BANTAMWEIGHT? HE MIGHT EVEN LOSE HIS LIFE IF HE'S NOT CAREFUL.


PLEASE NOT LOOK AT ME LIKE THAT, MISS.
WOULD YOU,
INSTEAD, COULD YOU PLEASE ARRANGE MY MATCH WITH JOE IF EVEN JUST A DAY SOONER...?

林食料品店

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HELP ME UNLOAD ALL THIS STUFF IN THE TRUNK!

I'M BACK!

林食料品店

THEN COULD YOU GO CALL MY WIFE OVER?

HE'S OUT ON ANOTHER ERRAND

HUH? WHERE'D THE MAMMOTH GO?

HERE'S THE CANNED G-

DEAR! COME OVER HERE AND HELP ME!

IT'S FINE, IT'S FINE.

I'VE ALREADY STARTED TRAINING AT THE GYM.

ENOUGH WITH THE CRIPPLE-TREATMENT.

I CAN'T HAVE YOU CARRYING THESE HEAVY LOADS AROUND WHEN YOU'VE YET TO TAKE OFF YOUR BANDAGES.

I GOT THEM FRESH FROM THE CHICKEN FARM AS SOON AS THEY WERE LAID.

YES, THEIR SMOOTH PALE SHELLS LOOK ALMOST AS NICE AS YOUR BALD HEAD.

ALRIGHT, I'LL DO IT SO YOU JUST GO INSIDE AND WIPE THE GLASS CASES.

JEEZ, YOU DON'T HAVE TO YELL. I CAN HEAR YOU JUST FINE.

CHECK OUT THESE EGGS!

I'M HOME.

AH, HE...O THERE YOU TWO.

YOU'RE BACK EARLY TODAY, MR. HAYASHI.

NO, IT'S NOTHING.

THANKS AGAIN.

I MET NISHI ON THE WAY BACK SO I ASKED HIM TO GIVE ME A RIDE.

HELP UNLOAD SOME, WILL YA?

AH, GOOD TIMING. THERE'RE STILL SOME MORE FOOD IN THE TRUNK.

FEEL GOOD ENOUGH TO GO ON THE RING TONIGHT IF I HAVE TO

HA HA

FEELING ANY BETTER?

HEY

HI, YABUKI

WE GOT A WHOLE BUNCH TODAY!

YOU BET DID.

YO NISHI, DID YOU FINISH GETTING ALL THE ORDERS FOR TODAY?

YEAH, YEAH.

JUST DON'T PUSH YOURSELF.

THERE YOU GO AGAIN...

HM.

LET ME SEE

HERE, TAKE A LOOK.

DOWN YOU GO...

LET ME GO DO THE DELIVERIES THEN AT LEAST

THE SEKIYA HOUSE NEEDS 7 EGGS, 1 CANNED SALMON.

10 BOXES OF NOODLES, 2 BOXES OF SEAWEED...

WHY DON'T YOU JUST LET ME DO IT?

YOU'LL NEED THE WAGON TO MAKE ALL THE DELIVER-IES THOUGH.

LET ME GO OUT ONCE IN A WHILE AND DO SOME REAL MANUAL LABOUR.

IT'S NOT REALLY MY STYLE TO JUST WATCH OVER THE SHOP OR WIPE THE WINDOWS.

AH, WAIT!

WATCH OUT FOR CARS!

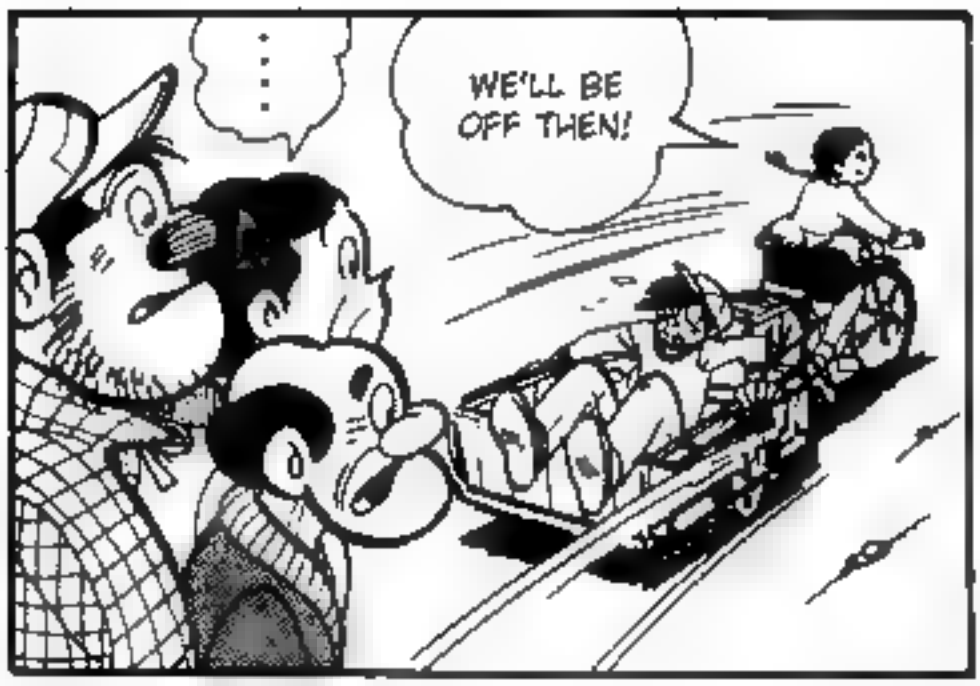
I'LL BE OFF THEN.

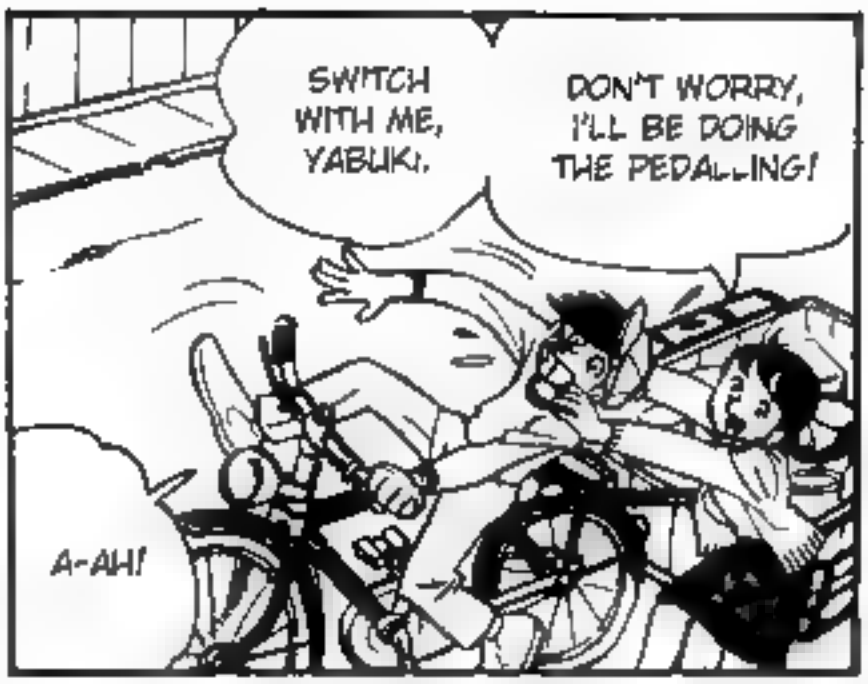
NORIKO! YOU KNOW JOE'S STILL INJURED, RIGHT?

SO LET ME ON THE BIKE.

I NEED TO GO TO A COUPLE OF MY FRIENDS' HOMES TO PREPARE FOR MY SCHOOL'S CULTURE FESTIVAL.

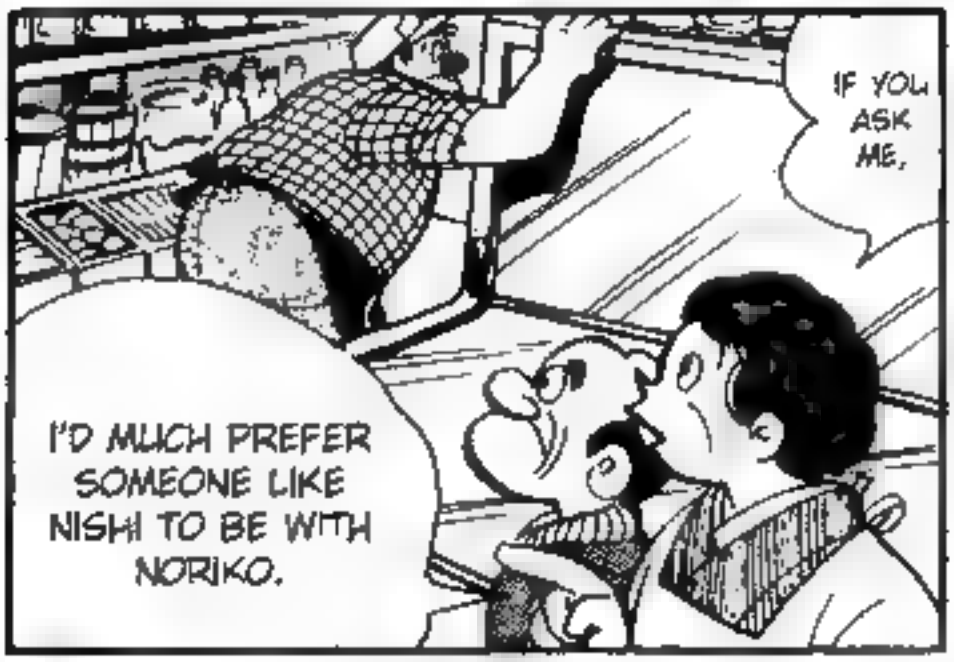
WHAT?

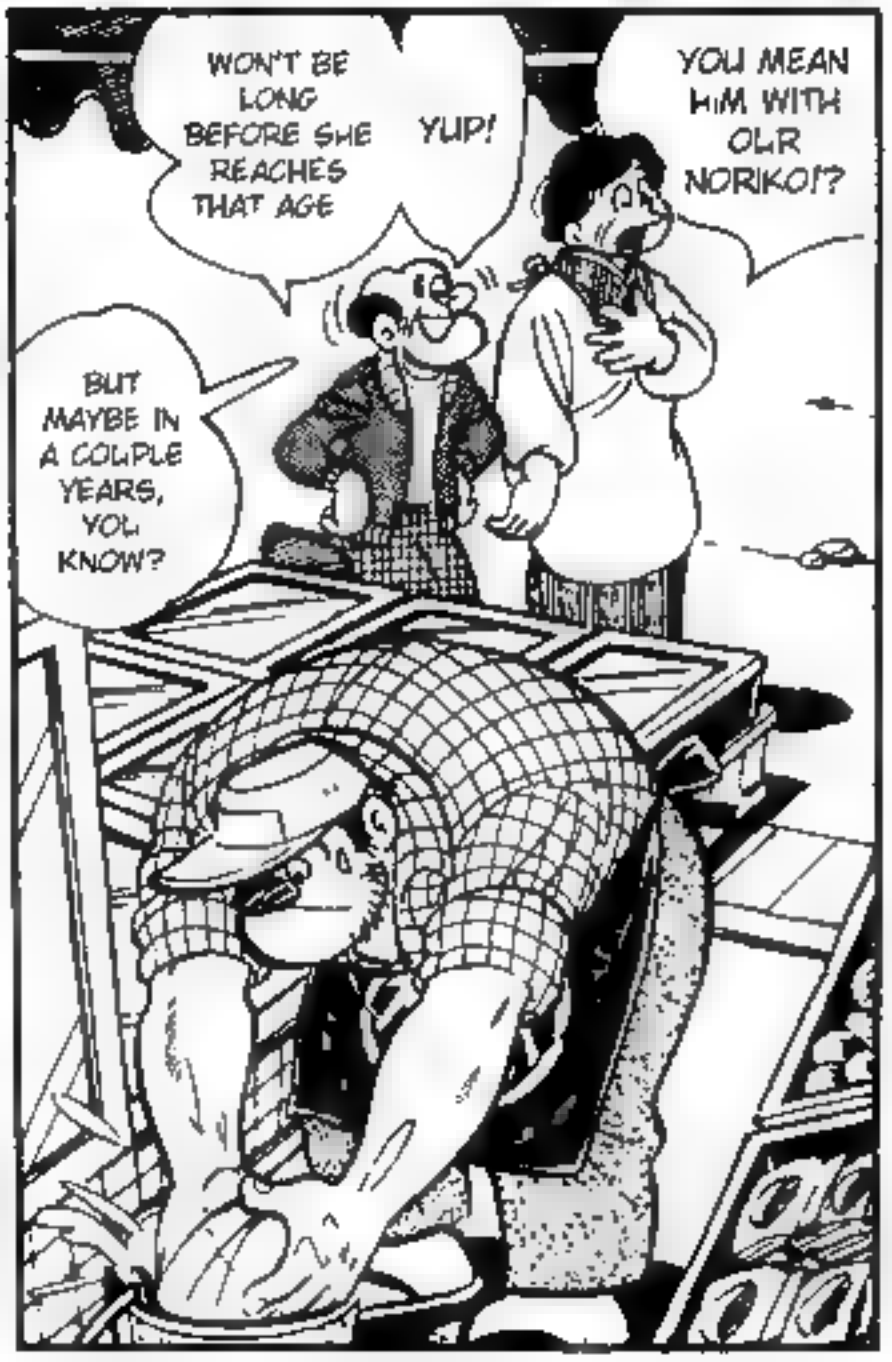

WE'LL BE OFF THEN!


SWITCH WITH ME, YABUKI.
DON'T WORRY, I'LL BE DOING THE PEDALLING!
A-AH!

WHAT?
DON'T YOU THINK THEY LOOK NICE TOGETHER?
WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THOSE TWO?

STOP IT, YOU'RE CREEPING ME OUT.
WHAT'RE YOU SMILING LIKE THAT FOR?


IF YOU ASK ME,
I'D MUCH PREFER SOMEONE LIKE NISHI TO BE WITH NORIKO.


WON'T BE LONG BEFORE SHE REACHES THAT AGE
YUP!
YOU MEAN HIM WITH OUR NORIKO!?
BUT MAYBE IN A COUPLE YEARS, YOU KNOW?

AND HARD-WORKING...
HE'S KIND, HONEST,
THE MAMMOTH EH?

HEE HEE!

HM..

O-OH MR. HAYASHI, PLEASE DON'T JOKE AROUND!

THEY DID LOOK PRETTY NICE TOGETHER AS THEY SHARED THAT BICYCLE JUST A MOMENT AGO.

NOW THAT YOU MENTION IT,

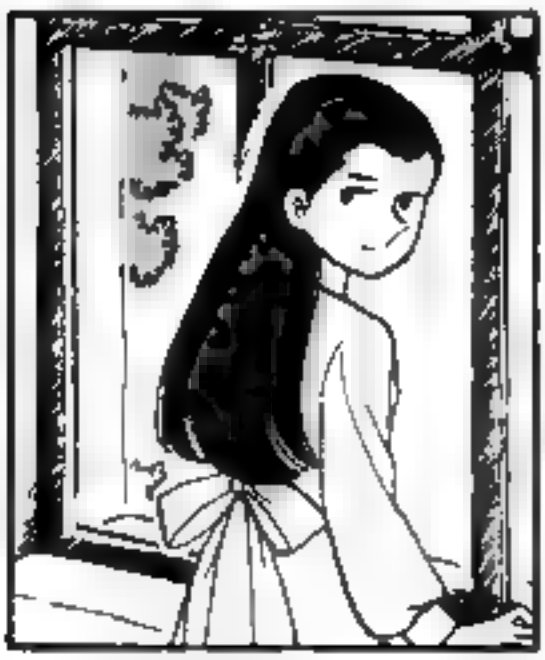
HEE HEE HEE

ガラガラ

DON'T YOU KNOW YOUR OWN STRENGTH, YOU IDIOT!?

S-SORRY SIR...

HOW MUCH DO YOU WEIGH AT THE MOMENT?
I'M WORRIED THAT YOU'RE PUSHING YOURSELF TOO HARD



121-LBS.
THAT'S STILL 3 POUNDS OVER THE BANTAM-WEIGHT LIMIT.

I HAVE SOMETHING I NEED TO GET OUT OF MY CHEST.
RIKII-SHI.

I CAN ONLY THINK OF LOSING ANY MORE WEIGHT THAN THIS AS SUICIDE!

BUT EVEN DOING ALL THAT WAS BARELY ENOUGH TO GET YOU TO STAY AS A FEATHER-WEIGHT.

I KNOW YOU'RE EXTREMELY STRONG-WILLED AND UNTIL NOW, YOU'VE STRICTLY CONTROLLED HOW MUCH YOU EAT AND DRINK.

WITH THE WAY YOUR BODY IS SHAPED, EVEN LOWERING YOURSELF DOWN TO A FEATHERWEIGHT WAS PUSHING IT

RIKIISHI. I KNOW I'VE ASKED YOU SEVERAL TIMES BEFORE ALREADY...

IT'S JUST TOO MUCH!

YOUR SUNKEN EYES AND FAMISHED FIGURE SLOWLY WASTING AWAY BEFORE ME

I CAN'T BEAR TO EVEN LOOK AT YOU ANYMORE!

IT HASN'T EVEN BEEN VERY LONG SINCE HE ADVANCED PAST 4 ROUND MATCHES!

HE MAY BE A CERTIFIED PROFESSIONAL BOXER BUT HE'S STILL A BABY CHICK THAT JUST BARELY HATCHED IN THIS WORLD OF PRO-BOXING.

I MEAN,

BUT IS THERE REALLY SUCH AN IMPORTANT REASON THAT YOU NEED TO FIGHT YABUKI EVEN AT THE RISK OF YOUR LIFE?

SO WHY DO YOU HAVE TO FORCE YOURSELF THROUGH SUCH PAINFUL WEIGHT LOSS ALL IN ORDER TO FIGHT YABUKI? WHY!?

COMPARED TO THAT, YOU'RE ALREADY A WELL-KNOWN AND RANKED FEATHER-WEIGHT BOXER. IT WON'T BE LONG BEFORE YOU CAN FIGHT A CHAMPIONSH P TITLE MATCH.

WAIT!

EXCUSE ME MISS, BUT DINNER HAS BEEN PREPARED.

OH,

WE'LL BE THERE SHORTLY.

IS WORRIED SICK ABOUT YOU.

MY GRAND-FATHER TOO,

COULD YOU AT LEAST GIVE US AN ANSWER AS TO SETTLE OUR MINDS?

PLEASE GIVE ME A STRAIGHT ANSWER!

RIKISHI,

AND I DOUBT YOU'D UNDER-STAND EVEN IF I TRIED TO EXPLAIN IT TO YOU.

THIS MATTER IS ABOUT A MAN'S VIEW OF THE WORLD,

IT'S JUST ..

SO PLEASE DON'T PRESS ME FOR ONE, MISS.

I'M ACTUALLY A LITTLE SURPRISED BY MY OWN CONVICTION AS WELL SO I DOUBT I CAN GIVE YOU A GOOD ANSWER.

HA...

IT'S NOTHING QUITE AS ROMANTIC AS THAT

PLEASE DON'T READ TOO MUCH INTO IT, MISS.

AND BECAUSE OF THAT, YOU'RE NOW JEOPARDIZING YOUR ENTIRE BOXING CAREER..

YOU'RE TRYING TO SETTLE THINGS WITH HIM BECAUSE YOU AND HE TIED IN THAT BOXING MATCH BACK IN JUVENILE DETENTION CENTER.

I DO KNOW

I CAN'T ADVANCE IF I DON'T BRING DOWN YABUKI JOE WITH MY OWN HANDS FIRST.

BUT THAT ONE PESKY BUT DANGEROUS THORN BY MY SIDE !

HOLDING FAME IN ONE HAND AND RICHES IN THE OTHER, I WANT THE WHOLE WORLD TO KNOW THE NAME, RIKIISHI TOORU!

AND NOT JUST THE JAPANESE CHAMPION EITHER. I WANT TO BE THE BEST IN ASIA, I WANT TO BE THE BEST IN THE WHOLE WORLD!

TO TELL YOU THE TRUTH, I WANT TO BE A FAMOUS CHAMPION IF EVEN A DAY SOONER.

DOES THAT MAKE SENSE TO YOU?

OTHERWISE, I GET THE FEELING I WON'T HAVE THE CONFIDENCE AND CONVICTION IT TAKES TO BECOME A TRUE WORLD CHAMPION...

I CAN FINALLY CONFIDENTLY SET OUT ON MY PATH FOR FAME, FORTUNE AND GLORY.

IF ONLY I COULD BEAT HIM ONCE AND FOR ALL,

IF

BUT

IF THERE'S ANOTHER WHO TIED WITH ME, EVEN IF HE IS IN ANOTHER WEIGHT CLASS!

I SIMPLY CAN'T STAND TRYING TO BECOME THE VERY BEST IN THE WORLD OF BOXING,

SO TO SIMPLY PUT IT,

DO YOU THINK YOU CAN WIN AGAINST YABUK EVEN WITH ALL THAT?

YOU'LL BE FORCING A HANDICAP ON YOURSELF BY SUBJECTING YOURSELF THROUGH THIS GRUELLING WEIGHT LOSS.

YES, OF COURSE!

BUT YOU'LL !

THIS MEANS THAT UNLIKE WOLF, I KNOW YABUKI'S WEAK AND STRONG POINTS INSIDE OUT.

AND MORE IMPORTANTLY, YABUKI AND I LIVED AND ATE IN THE SAME PLACE BACK IN JUVIE

HE'LL FACE A MUCH TOUGHER TIME WHEN FIGHTING ME, SINCE I'VE ALREADY PLANNED MANY STRATEGIES SPECIFICALLY DESIGNED AGAINST HIM.

ALTHOUGH HE BEAT WOLF SPLENDIDLY,

NOW THEN, SHALL WE HEAD TO THE DINING HALL?

SO PLEASE STOP WORRYING ABOUT ME, MISS.

EXCUSE US FOR ARRIVING SO LATE.

RIKI-SHI,

YOU LOOK EVEN SKINNIER THAN YOU DID YESTERDAY

I APPRECIATE YOUR CONCERNS BUT .

HE BROUGHT IT ON MY ORDERS. YOU NEED TO INTAKE MORE CALORIES TO MAINTAIN YOUR STRENGTH.

B-BUT .

TAKE THIS AWAY!

I TOLD YOU NOT TO GIVE ME ANYTHING OTHER THAN FRUITS!

THIS ALONE WILL BE ENOUGH FOR ME.

A-AS YOU WISH .

NOW TAKE IT AWAY!

I HAVE MY OWN PLANS TO FOLLOW, MR. SHIRAKI.

WHA!

AH!

AHH!

ガッガッ

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RIKII-SHI!

PANT

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ガッ

OH MY!

AH-

IF ONLY YOU WOULD SETTLE FOR FEATHERWEIGHT, THEN YOU COULD ENJOY THIS NICE MEAL WITH US!

T-THANK YOU FOR THE MEA....

I CAN'T

MY RIVAL...

YOU COULD ENJOY NICE COLD DRINKS AND GIVE MY CHEFS A CHANCE TO SHOW OFF THE R SKILLS!

RIKIISHI, WAIT!

FROM TODAY ON, I'LL BE SLEEPING AT THE SHIRAKI GYM INSTEAD OF THIS LUXURIOUS MANSION.
EXCUSE ME, SIR.

IF I CAN'T EVEN HANDLE THIS MUCH HARDSHIP, THEN I'M ALREADY AS GOOD AS BEATEN.
MY RIVAL IS ONE WHO REJECTED SHIRAKI GYM, THE BEST EQUIPPED BOXING GYM IN ALL OF JAPAN, TO TRAIN IN A DILAPIDATED RUBBLE BELOW A DINGY BRIDGE

……
……

GOOD NIGHT.

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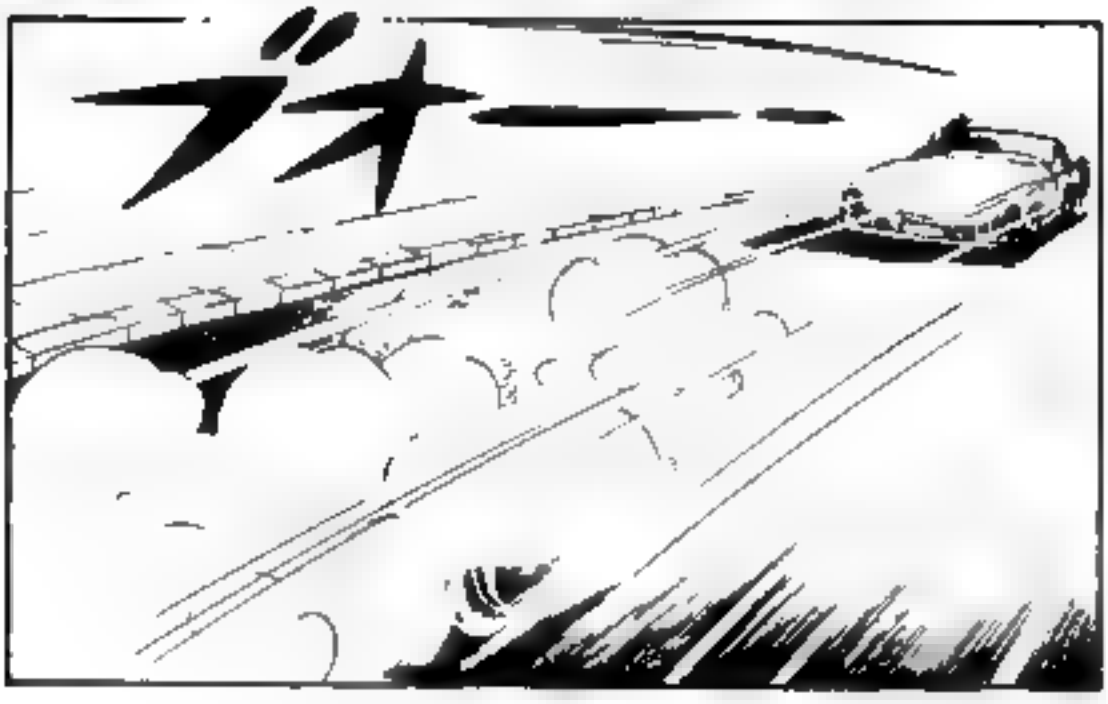
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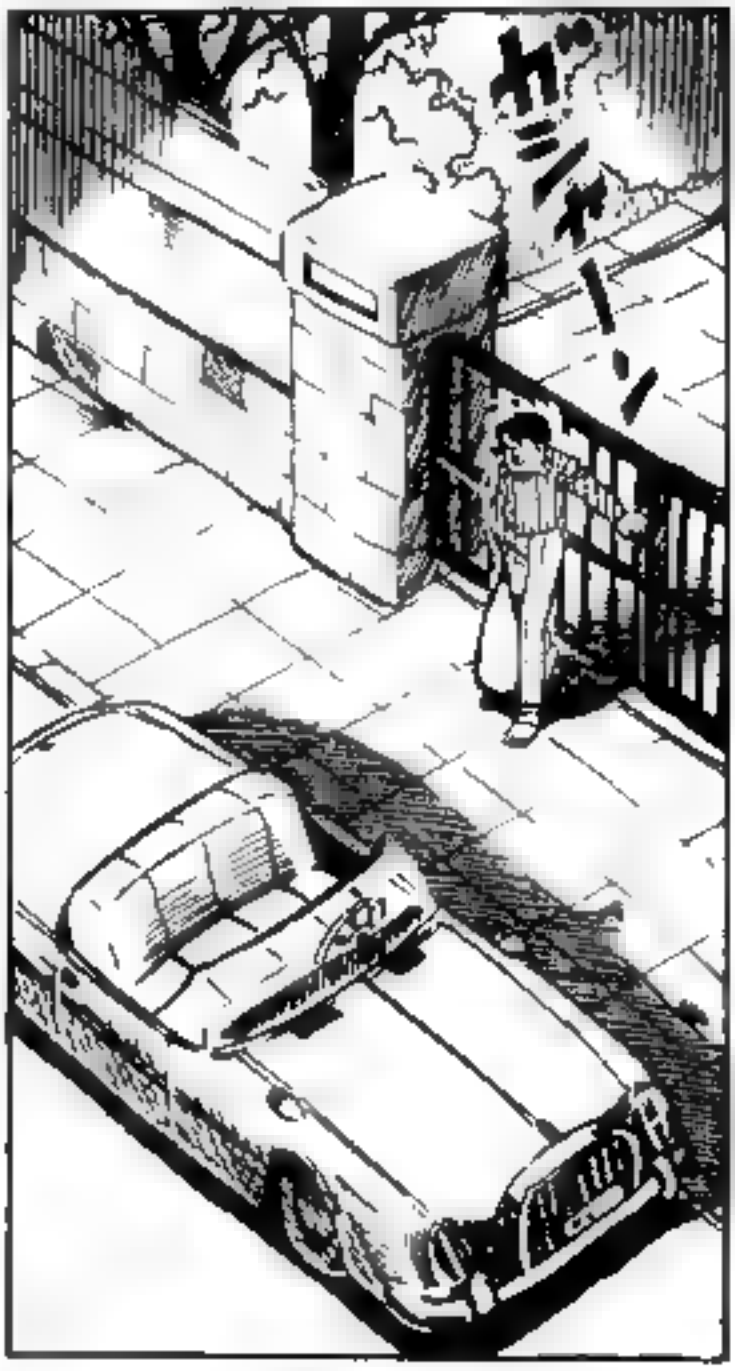
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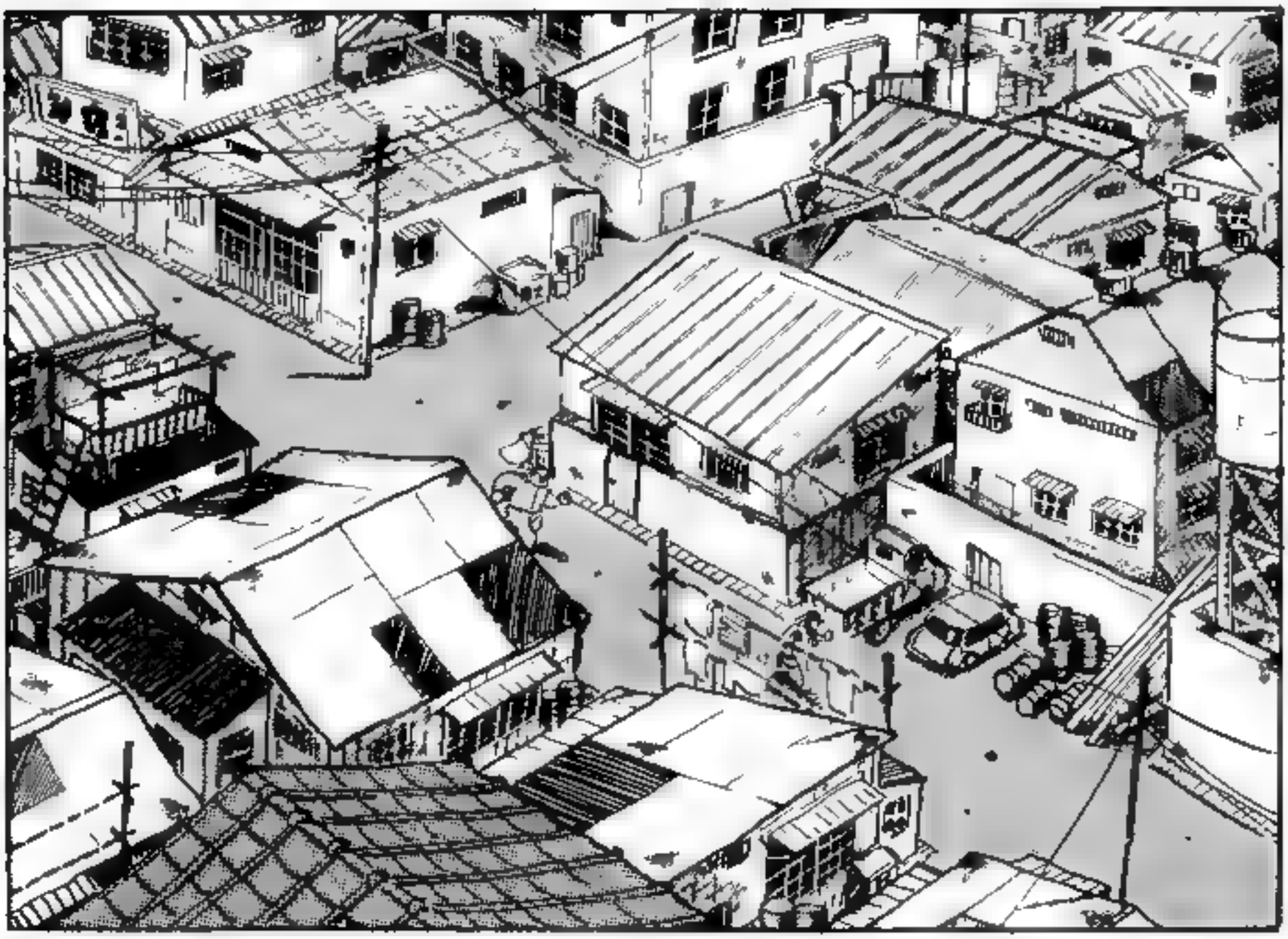
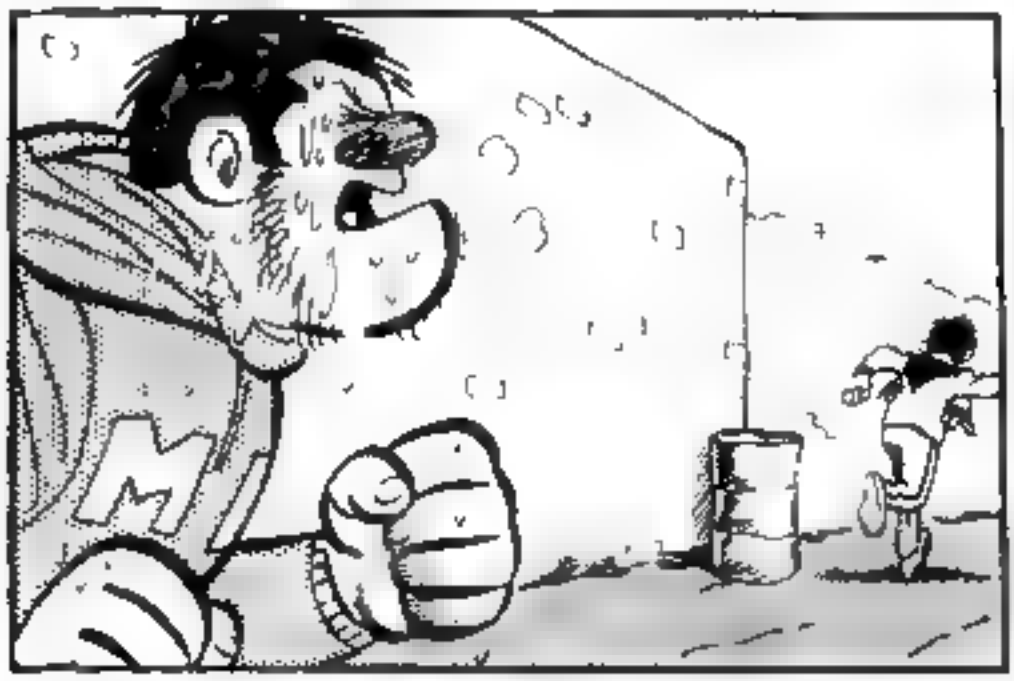
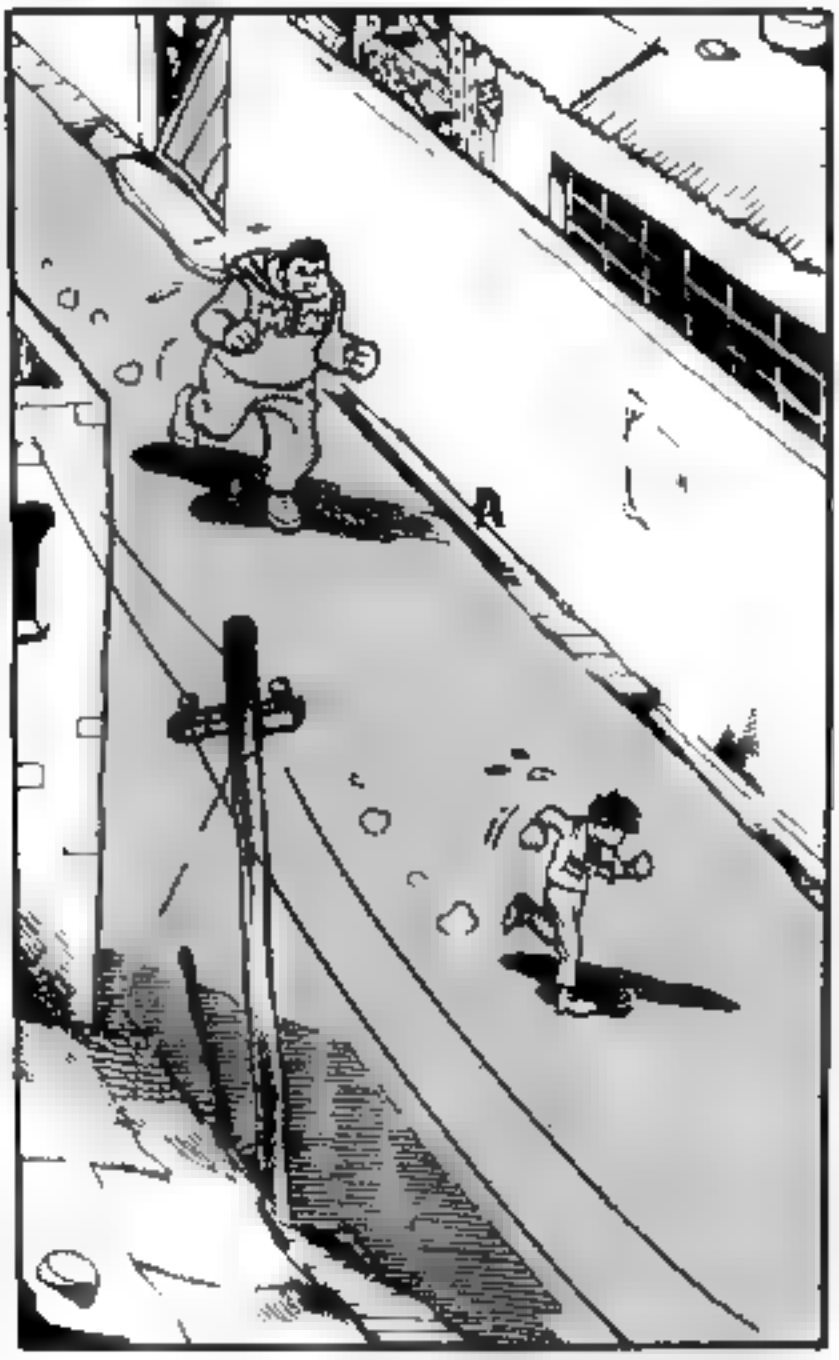
HEY, RIKIISHI
WHAT'RE YOU DOING HERE AT THIS HOUR?
WHA?
W-WHY?
PLEASE USE THAT KEY TO LOCK THE DOOR ONCE I'M INSIDE.
I'LL BE SLEEPING IN THE GYM'S STORAGE ROOM FROM TODAY ..
RIKI-ISHI....
RI...
I'M COUNTING ON YOU!
I WANT YOU TO LOCK THE DOOR SO I DON'T START DRINKING AT THE NEAREST FOUNTAIN DURING THE NIGHT.
WHAT'S MOST PAINFUL TO ENDURE RIGHT NOW ISN'T HUNGER BUT THIRST







HUFF
HUFF

BECAUSE YOU HAVE NO IDEA. HOW HUNGRY... I AM...

Y-YOU CAN ONLY SAY THAT...

C'MON! PICK UP THE PACE!

IT AIN'T ROADWORK IF YOU CRAWL LIKE A SNAIL!

HUFF HUFF

WE'RE ALMOST DONE SO JUST HANG IN THERE!

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HUFF HUFF

HUFF HUFF

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WHEEZE

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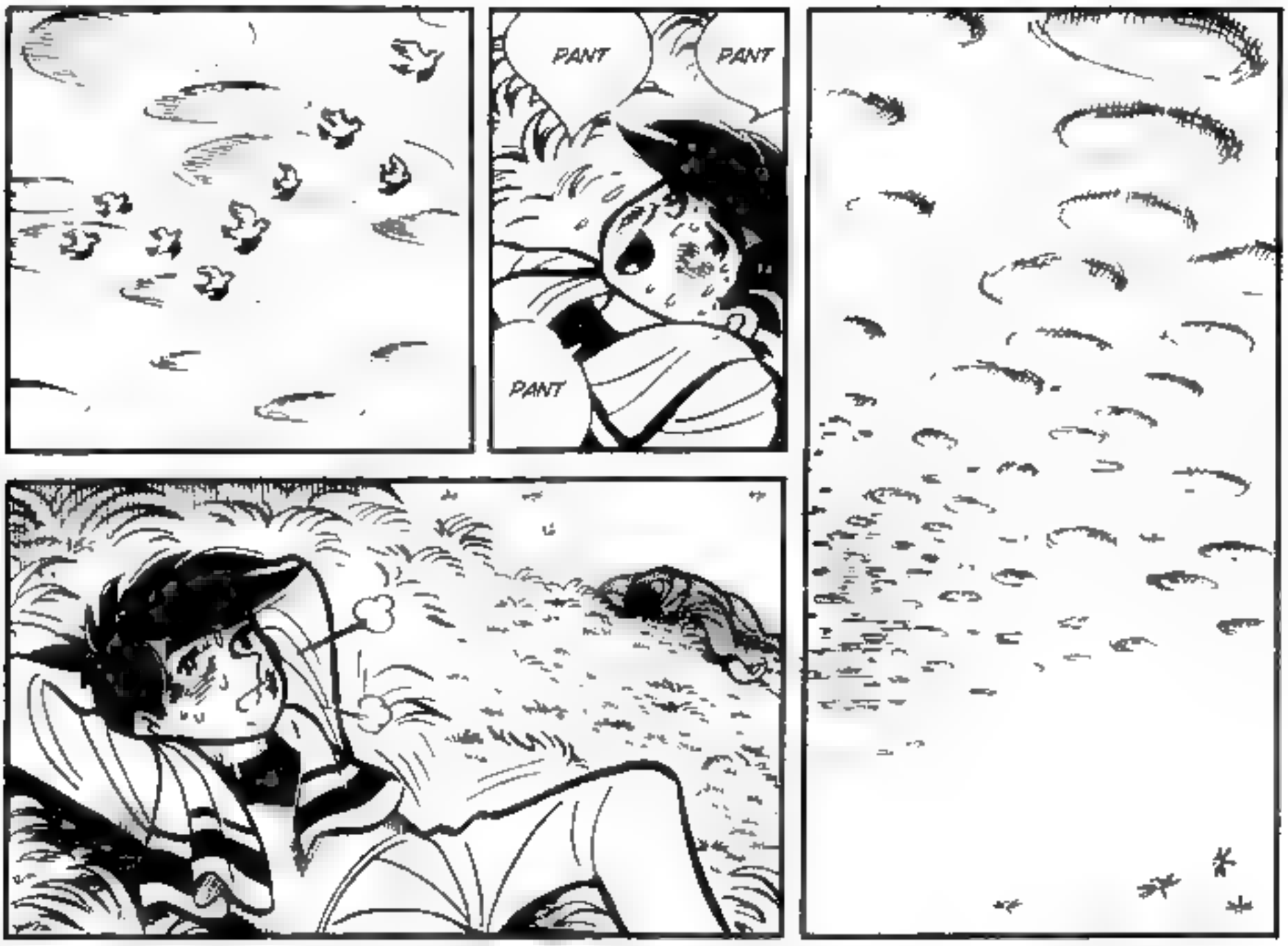
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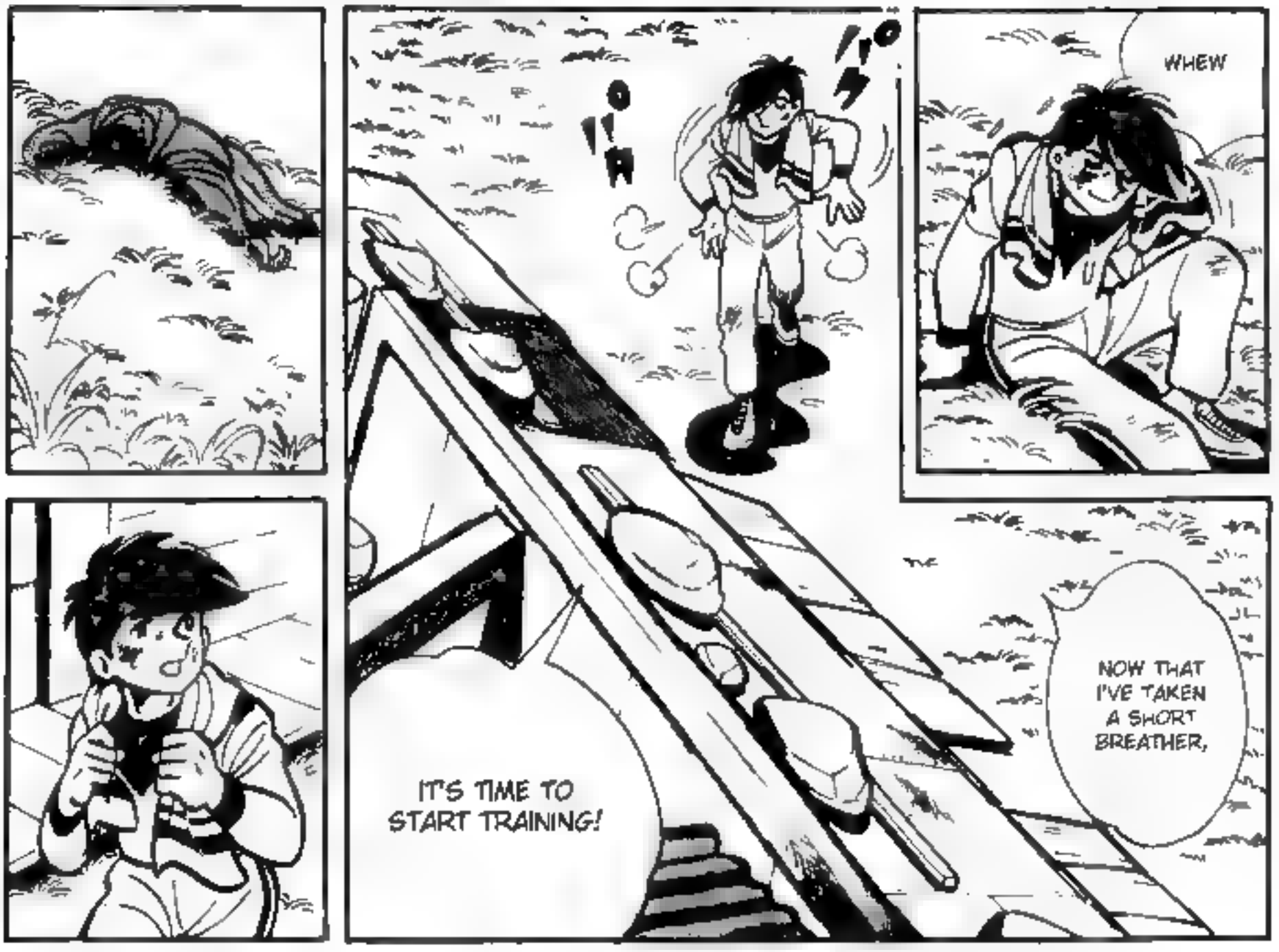
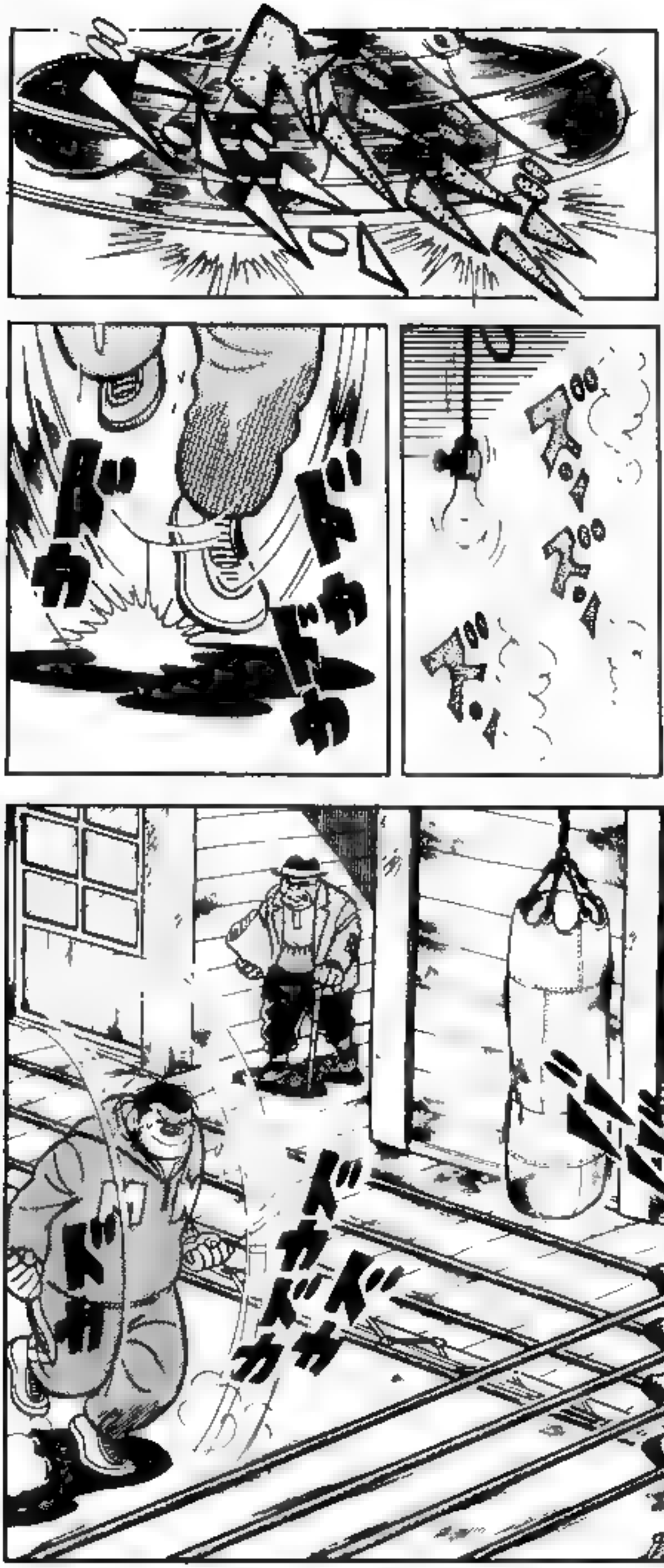

WHEW
NOW THAT I'VE TAKEN A SHORT BREATHER,
IT'S TIME TO START TRAINING!


I SAID IT'S TIME TO START TRAIN-ING!
NISHI!
I HEARD YOU... THE FIRST TIME
YEAH

DO YOU NOT HAVE THE NIGHT CONSTRUCTION JOB TONIGHT?

YOU'RE BACK PRETTY EARLY TODAY

OH YOU'RE BACK.

YEAH.

WELCOME BACK.

ENOUGH BABBLING AND KEEP TRAINING!

THE BELL HASN'T RUNG YET!

JEEZ, GIVE US A BREAK WILL YA. ?

I'M DONE WITH THE JUMPING ROPES!

AND THAT'S THE BELL.

YOU MEAN FROM THE BOXING COMMISSIONER?

WHAT WAS IT ABOUT?

I GOT A SUDDEN CALL FROM THE OFFICE TODAY.

IT SEEMS THEY WANT A MATCH BETWEEN RIKIISHI AND JOE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. .

SHIRAKI GYM WANTS TO OFFICIALLY ARRANGE A MATCH WITH OUR GYM.

OH...

NO MATTER HOW MUCH HE SLIMS DOWN, HE WON'T BE ABLE TO STAY A BANTAMWEIGHT FOR LONG.

THIS IS THE BIG AND STOUT RIKIISHI WE'RE TALKING ABOUT.

I'M FINE WITH FIGHTING HIM EVEN TONIGHT IF I HAVE TO.

AS SOON AS POSSIBLE THOUGH...

BUT IT SEEMS THEY WANT TO DO IT,

THE DATE HASN'T BEEN SET YET

WHEN'LL IT BE?

SO THEN

BUT YOU SHOULD ALREADY BE AWARE THAT HE'S ON A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT LEVEL FROM WOLF

HE MAY BE DISADVANTAGED DUE TO HAVING TO LOSE SO MUCH WEIGHT,

YOU'LL REGRET IT IF YOU UNDERESTIMATE RIKIISHI.

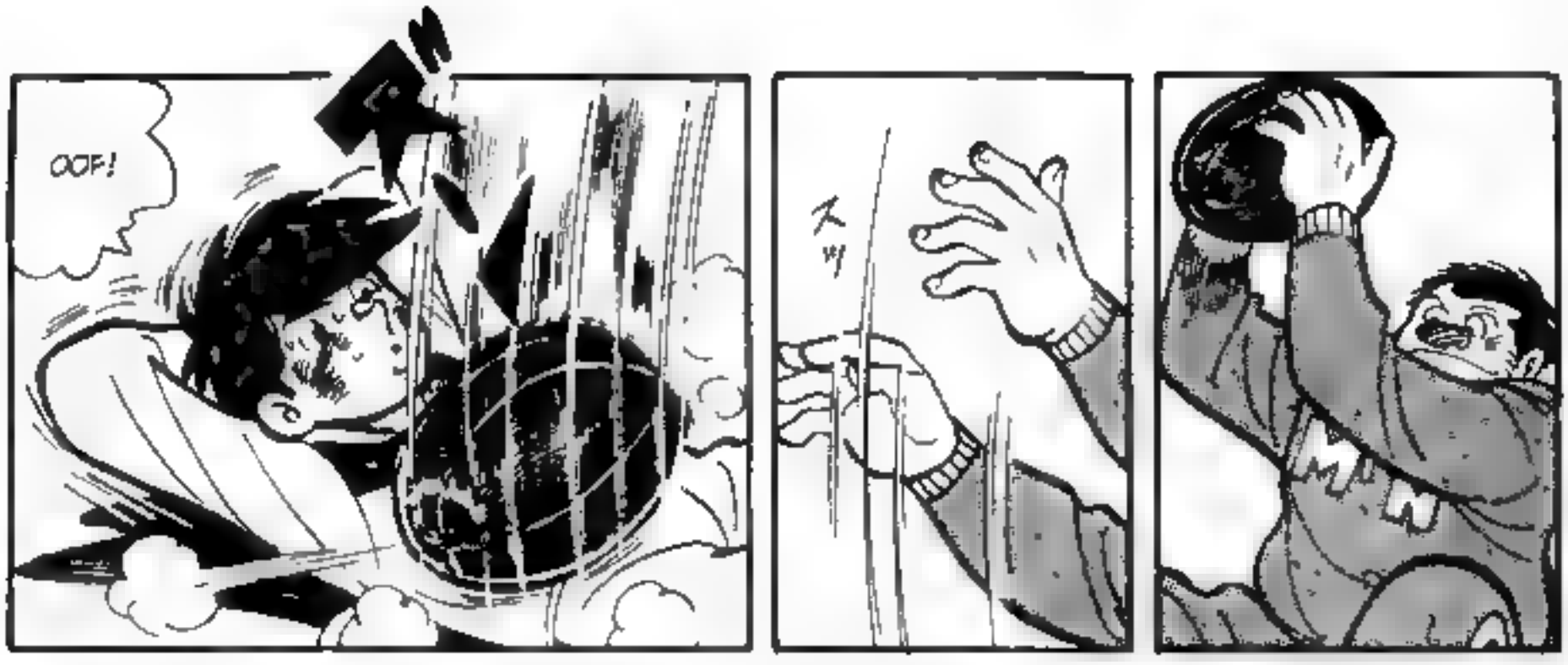
ENOUGH WITH THE TOUGH TALK

GO BACK TO YOUR ROUTINES.

THERE GOES THE BELL

YOU DON'T THINK I'VE IMPROVED AT ALL?

SO WHAT IF HE'S ON A DIFFERENT LEVEL?


OOF!

HE'S NOT ACTING VERY ADULT-LIKE.
FOR A PROFES-SIONAL BOXER,
AND THOUGH I CAN UNDER-STAND WANTING TO SETTLE THINGS ONCE AND FOR ALL, HE AND YOU AREN'T IN JUVIE ANYMORE.
I DON'T KNOW IF IT'S TENACITY OR STUBBORNESS,
CAN THE GRUMBLING, OLD MAN!

JUST BE STILL.
STOP MOVING AROUND SO MUCH
IF THAT'S NOT A VERY ADULT-LIKE THING TO DO, THEN I DON'T THINK I EVER WANT TO BE AN ADULT!
OOF!

OOF!

I BET IT'S PAINFUL TRYING TO AVOID EATING AND DRINKING FOR SO LONG.

JUST ARRANGE THE MATCH AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, WILL YA?

I'D HAVE DONE THE EXACT SAME THING!

IF I WERE IN HIS SHOES,

OOF!

STAND ON HIS STOMACH LIKE BEFORE, NISHI.

SEEMS LIKE THE MEDICINE BALL'S NOT ENOUGH.

NISHI, GET ON MY ABS.

MY FEELINGS EXACTLY.

IF IT WERE POSSIBLE, I'D HAVE YOU TRAIN FOR HIM BY PUTTING A STEAM ROLLER ON YOUR ABS.

IN ANY CASE, YOUR NEXT OPPONENT WILL BE RIKIISHI.

UGH...!

HERE I GO.

OK,

NISHI...

N...

UGHH!

THIS FEELS MORE LIKE A LIGHTHE- NO, MORE LIKE A HEAVYWEIGHT...!

YOU CALL YOURSELF A MIDDLEWEIGHT WITH THAT BODY...?

WHAT'S THE MEANING OF THIS?

I SHOULD BE STRICTLY WATCHING OVER HOW MUCH YOU EAT AND DRINK...

YOU LOOK LIKE A HEAVY- WEIGHT TO ME TOO.

NO...

I-I'M STRICTLY MAINTAINING MY WEIGHT AS A MIDDLEWEIGHT

W-WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

IT'S ALMOST DINNER TIME SO GO WASH UP, YOU TWO.

WELL WHATEVER.

O-OK ..

MY BODY'S JUST THE TYPE TO LOOK MUCH HEAVIER THAN IT IS ACTUALLY ..

I... I TOLD YOU BEFORE

I DROPPED BY SHIRAKI GYM.

ON MY WAY BACK,

IT SEEMS HE'S ALWAYS EITHER IN THE SAUNA OR TRAINING IN A BOILING HOT ROOM.

MHMM.

DID YOU SEE RIKIISHI?

HE ALMOST LOOKED LIKE A DEMON WITH HIS SUNKEN EYES AND STARVED APPEARANCE

HE'S OUT OF HIS MIND.

I HEAR HE GETS BY ON A SINGLE TOMATO PER DAY

AND FOR FOOD,

BUT YOU HAVEN'T EVEN FINISHED YOUR MEAL!

W-WHAT?

I'LL BE GOING TO SLEEP NOW

THANKS FOR THE MEAL.

. . . .

I THINK I'VE GAINED TOO MUCH WEIGHT EVER SINCE MY MATCH WITH WOLF.

I'VE GOTTA START SLIMMING DOWN FOR MY MATCH AGAINST RIKIISHI TOO...

GOOD NIGHT.

. . . .

ヘーッ

UMM.

I'LL GO TO SLEEP TOO.

NOD

I WAS ACTUALLY THINKING OF BULKING UP TO A FEATHER-WEIGHT AFTER MY MATCH WITH WOLF BUT...

SO IT'S FINALLY OUR TIME TO FIGHT...

BUT IF ALL THAT WEIGHT LOSS IS TOO MUCH TO BEAR AND ENDS UP COSTING YOU THE MATCH BETWEEN US,

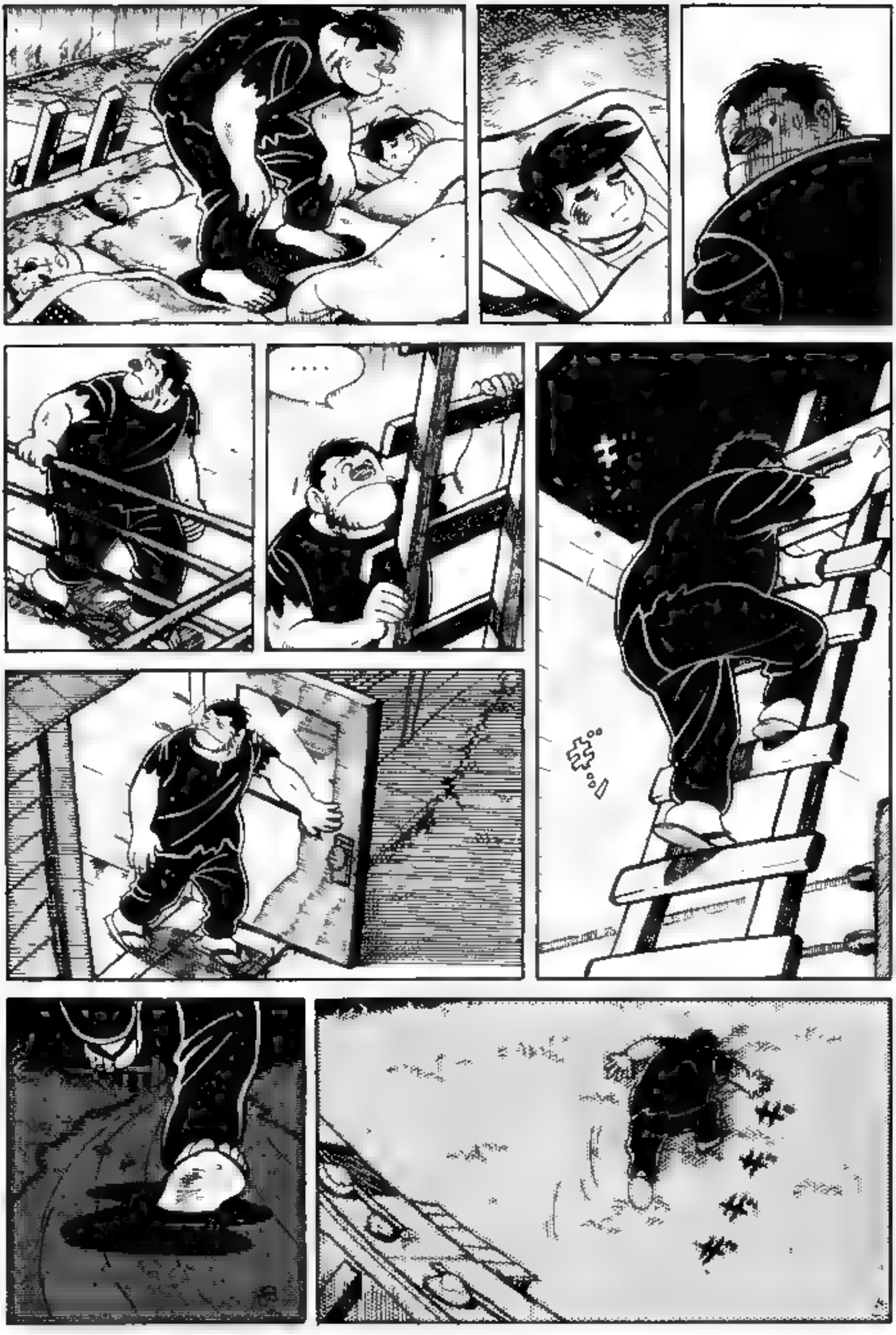
SO I GUESS IT SORT OF MAKES SENSE THAT YOU'D WANT TO BE THE ONE TO FIRST COME DOWN TO MY CLASS..

WELL, WHETHER IT WAS LEAVING JUVIE OR GETTING A PRO-BOXING LICENSE, YOU WERE ALWAYS FIRST.

AND NEXT TIME, I'LL BE THE ONE TO BULK UP TO GO CHALLENGE YOU.

THEN YOU SHOULD JUST GO BACK TO BEING A FEATHER-WEIGHT.

WITH THAT, THERE SHOULD BE NO REGRETS...



WELCOME, SIR!

HUFF

HUFF

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YES, COMING RIGHT UP!

AND MAKE IT QUICK, PLEASE!

GIVE ME 2 BOWLS OF UDON, MISTER!

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IT'S HEAV-ENLY!

THIS SMELL...

AH!

HERE YOU GO SIR!

J-JOE ..

SO YOU JUST WANTED A LATE NIGHT GRUB, EH?

I WAS WON-DERING WHERE YOU WERE HEADING OFF TO AT THIS LATE HOUR

AGH!

HE COMES EVERY NIGHT AROUND THIS TIME.

YES, YES!

DOES THIS GUY HERE COME HERE OFTEN?

NO, I'M FINE.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO ORDER SOMETHING AS WELL?

WELCOME!

NGH

UGH

OOF!

YOUR SHAMEFUL,

AND PITIFUL SELF.!

I REALLY DIDN'T WANT TO SEE THIS SIDE OF YOU, NISHI...

I WANTED TO BELIEVE IN YOU UNTIL THE VERY END...

I REALLY WISHED I HADN'T SEEN YOU LIKE THIS.

YOU'VE NOW STEPPED INTO THE PATH OF LOSERS!

UNLIKE ME OR RIKIISHI,

AND IT'LL EVENTUALLY BE TOO PAINFUL TO BEAR..

THE MORE PAINFUL IT'LL BE TO LOSE WEIGHT..

AND EVERY BITE,

WITH EVERY DROP,

IT'S... IT'S AS THE OLD MAN SAID...

TO ENDURE THE PAIN IS THE WORLD OF BOXING.

I DEFINITELY WON'T GIVE IN... BECAUSE RIKIISHI IS BEARING PAIN FAR WORSE THAN YOU OR ME...

ME, ON THE OTHER HAND...

AND THAT'S THE WORLD RIKIISHI AND I'LL BE LIVING IN...

I JUST CAN'T... DO IT...

I'M DONE FOR..

YOU AIN'T NOTHING BUT TRASH NOW!

DAMN RIGHT YOU'RE DONE FOR!

YOU SHOULD BE ASHA-MED!

SEVERAL DAYS SINCE THAT NIGHT.

RIKIISHI TOORU'S MATCH WAS TO BE HELD AT KOURAKUEN HALL.

BEFORE HE GOES ON TO CHALLENGE YABUKI JOE.

THIS WOULD BE RIKIISHI'S FIRST MATCH IN BANTAMWEIGHT.

BUT TO SEE HOW WELL HE AND HIS SHIRAKI GYM COULD HANDLE THE TOUGH WEIGHT LOSS.

THOUSANDS HAD GATHERED TO SEE NOT JUST RIKIISHI ALONE,

NOT SURPRISINGLY,

ALTHOUGH NOT VERY HIGH IN RANKINGS, HE WAS A VETERAN WITH MORE THAN 10 YEARS OF EXPERIENCE UNDER HIS BELT.

HIS OPPONENT WAS THE 8TH RANKED BANTAM WEIGHT FIGHTER OF THE PHILIPPINES

AMONG THE EXCITED CROWD WAS TANGE AND JOE.

LOOK AT THAT FILIPPINO FIGHTER..
HIS BODY'S COVERED WITH SCARS.
PANCHO LEO, WAS IT? I FEEL LIKE I'VE HEARD THAT NAME FROM SOMEWHERE BEFORE...

WHY IS RIKIISHI FIGHTING SOME NO-NAME FILIPPINO FOR HIS FIRST BANTAMWEIGHT MATCH?
HEY OLD MAN,

IT'S NOT SURPRISING THAT OTHER BANTAMWEIGHT FIGHTERS WOULD BE HESITANT TO FIGHT HIM.
THIS IS RIKIISHI WE'RE TALKING ABOUT. HE WAS STRONG ENOUGH TO STAND OUT IN THE FEATHERWEIGHT DIVISION THAT'S SAID TO BE FULL OF SO MANY FORMIDABLE BOXERS.

'CAUSE HE CAN'T FIND ANYONE ELSE

THE LAST THING THEY WANT TO DO IS MAKE THE YEARS OF INVESTMENT PUT INTO THEIR BOXERS BECOME MOOT DUE TO AN INJURY

JUST LIKE HOW YOU ENDED WOLF'S CAREER.

NONE OF THEM WANT TO WILL-INGLY SACRIFICE THEIR PRECIOUS BOXERS TO RIKIISHI.

THAT'S WHY ALL THE MANAGERS OF BANTAMWEIGHT BOXERS ARE KEEPING THEIR DISTANCE AWAY FROM RIKIISHI FOR NOW.

THAT PANCHO LEO'S NO PUSHOVER EITHER.

WELL.

SO THAT'S WHY THE ONLY ONE WHO WAS WILLING TO FIGHT WAS SOME FOREIGNER WHO DOESN'T EVEN KNOW ABOUT RIKIISHI.

HM.

IT'S JUST ONE DISADVANTAGE OF BEING TOO STRONG.

IT'S QUITE COMMON IN BOXING.

SO THIS FIGHT AGAINST AN OBSCURE FOREIGNER JUST MIGHT TURN INTO A REAL INTEREST-ING MATCH BETWEEN TWO HEAVY-HITTERS

I HEAR HE'S NOT AS QUICK AS HE USED TO BE BUT HIS KILLER PUNCH IS STILL STRONG AS EVER.

I HEAR BACK IN HIS PRIME, HE WAS EVEN STRONG ENOUGH TO CHALLENGE THE CHAMPION OF OPBF.*

HIS RANK MIGHT BE A LITTLE LOW BUT AS THOSE SCARS ALL OVER HIS BODY SHOWS, HE'S A BATTLE-HARDENED VETERAN WITH OVER 10 YEARS OF EXPERIENCE.

*ORIENTAL AND PACIFIC BOXING FEDERATION

AH, RIKISHI'S COMING OUT ..!

HAHA, LOOK AT HIM TRYING TO ACT COOL BY STRUTTING SLOWLY.

SBC

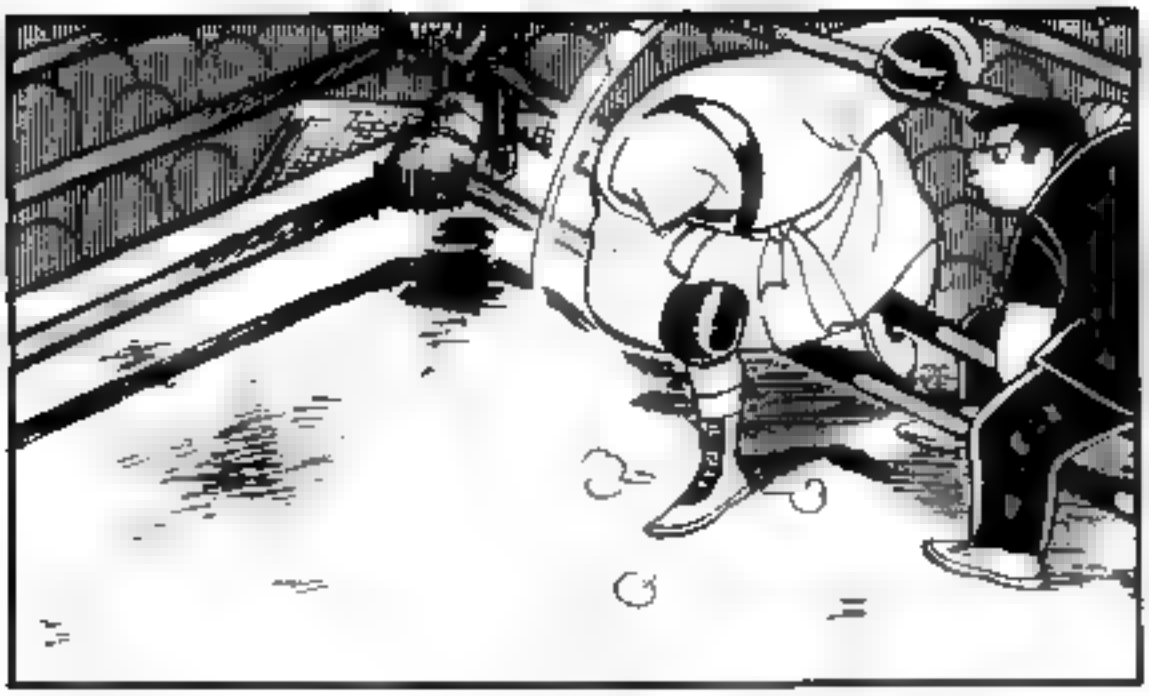
THAT'S RIGHT BECAUSE WE'LL FINALLY BE ABLE TO SEE YOU DUKE IT OUT WITH JOE!

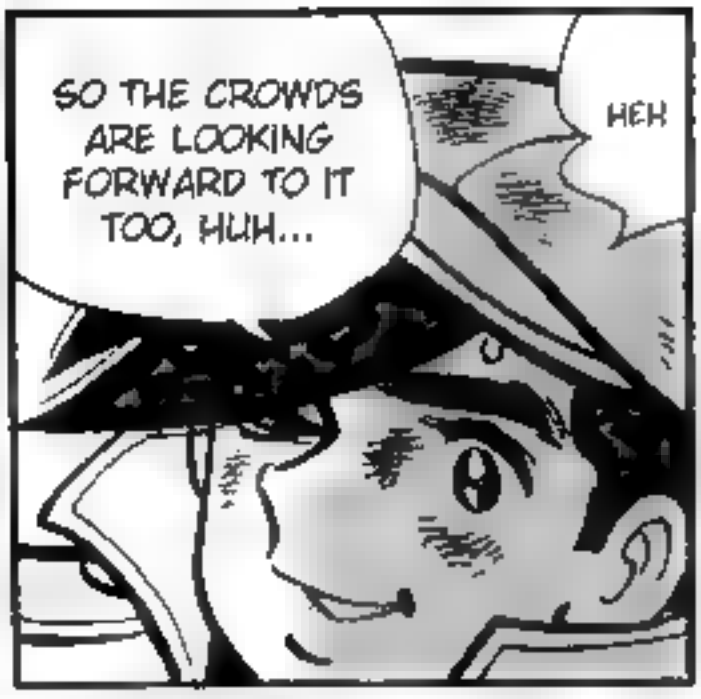
WE'RE REAL GLAD TO SEE YOU'VE CHANGED TO A BANTAMWEIGHT!

WE'VE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU, LADY-KILLER!

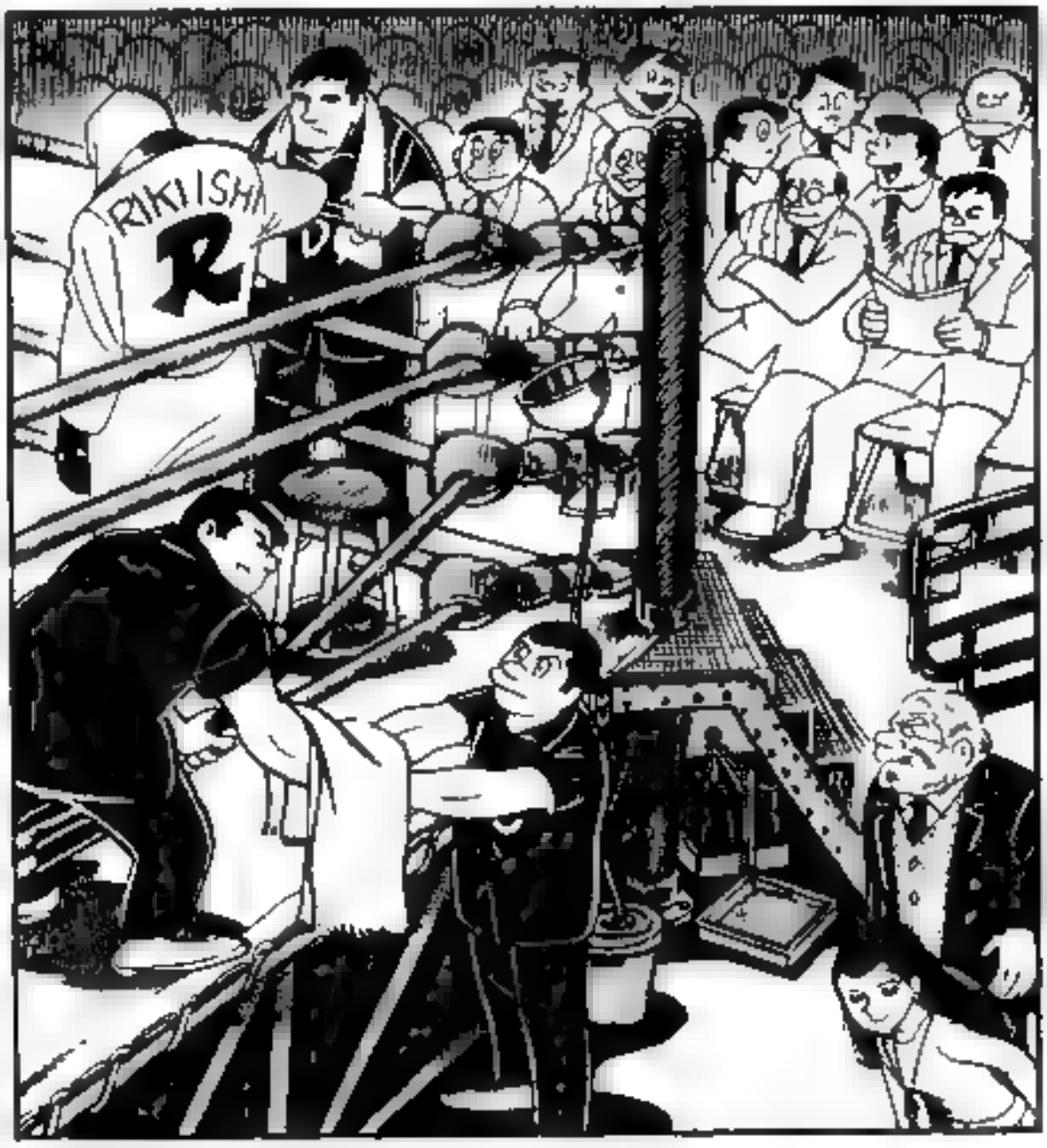
YEAH, THAT'LL BE A MATCH TO SEE! IT'D BE AS EXCITING AS THE ONE BETWEEN FIGHTING HARADA AND THE GOLDEN BANTAM!*

*FIGHTING HARADA REFERS TO MASAHIKO HARADA WHILE GOLDEN BANTAM REFERS TO EDER JOFRE.




SO THE CROWDS ARE LOOKING FORWARD TO IT TOO, HUH...
HEH

YOU BETTER FIGHT WELL 'CAUSE I'LL BE WATCHING!
HEY, RIKIISHI!


RIKIISHI
R

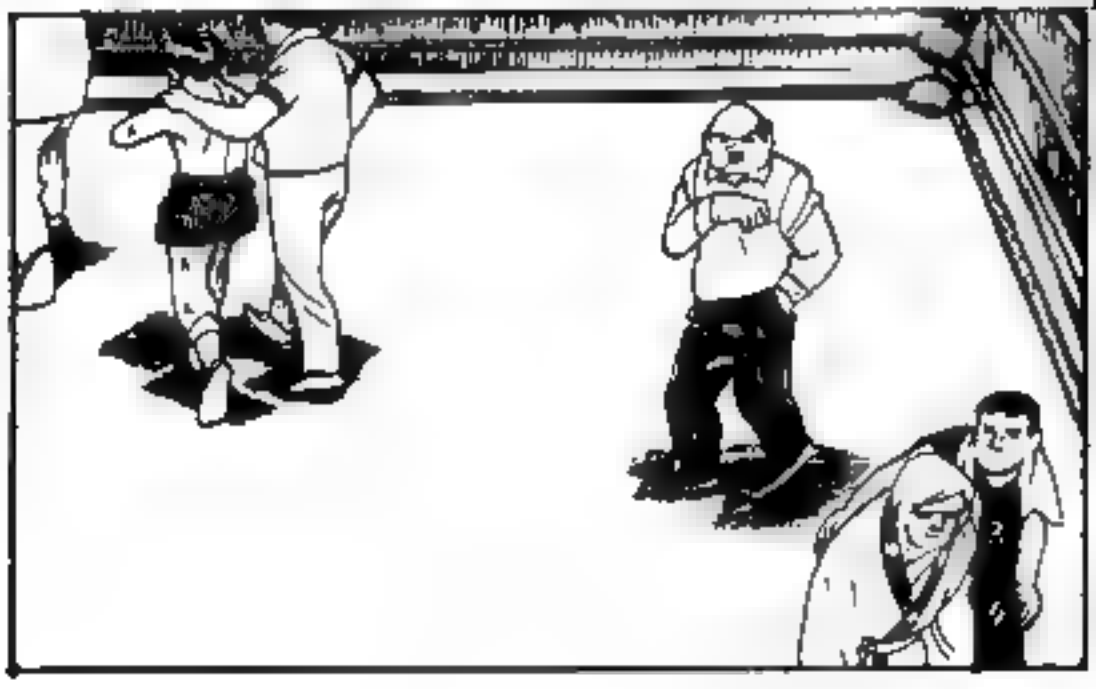
SO IF HIS FACE IS LIKE THAT THEN.
A BIT? THEY SAY THE FACE IS THE LAST PLACE IN YOUR BODY YOU LOSE FAT AND MUSCLE FROM.

HE DOES LOOK LIKE HE'S LOST A BIT OF WEIGHT
HMM.

THE 8TH RANKED BANTAMWEIGHT FIGHTER OF THE PHILIPPINES WEIGHING IN AT 117 SLBS.
IN THE RED CORNER,
PANCHO LEO!

RIKIISHI TOORU!
HAILING FROM SHIRAKI GYM AND WEIGHING IN AT 118LBS...
AND IN THE BLUE CORNER,

RIGHT ON THE WEIGHT LIMIT.
WHEW.



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IKISHI

SECONDS STEP OUT OF THE RING!

AHH...

D-D-D...

DID YOU SEE THAT...!?

BUT SEEING AS HOW THIS WAS ALL RIKIISHI'S IDEA, THERE'S NOTHING ANYONE COULD HAVE DONE TO STOP H.M...

IT WOULD BE AGAINST THE RULES IF THE FIGHTER'S COACH OR MANAGER HAD FORCED HIM INTO IT,

DOES THE BOXING FEDERATION REALLY ALLOW SUCH EXTREME WEIGHT LOSS?

T-THIS IS JUST PAINFUL TO SEE!

YOU CAN SEE ALL OF HIS RIBS...!

HE LOOKS LIKE HE CRAWLED BACK UP FROM HELL...

CAN HE EVEN FIGHT LIKE THAT ?

MORE IMPORTANTLY, WITH THAT FAMISHED BODY OF HIS,

I WONDER IF HE'LL REALLY HAVE THE STAMINA AND STRENGTH TO TAKE ON PANCHO LEO.

THIS WAS UNAVOIDABLE!

TO STUBBORNLY FORCE HIMSELF TO BECOME A BANTAMWEIGHT EVEN THOUGH HIS BODY IS NATURALLY BUILT SO BIG AND STOUT...

IT WAS... INEVITABLE.

DO YOUR BEST, RIKIISHI!
SO DO YOUR BEST, RIKIISHI!
IT'S THE UNAVOIDABLE ROAD WE'VE GOTTA CROSS IF WE WANT TO FIGHT EACH OTHER ON THE RINGS ONE DAY!
THIS IS THE REALITY OF THE WORLD YOU AND I LIVE IN!
NO MATTER HOW CRUEL, ABSURD, OR IMMATURE THE PEOPLE MAY SAY IT IS,

RIKIISHI SLOWLY BACKS AWAY WHILE AVOI-
LEO STARTS OUT ON THE OFFENSIVE AS SOON AS THE BELL RINGS!

AHH!
HIIHO!

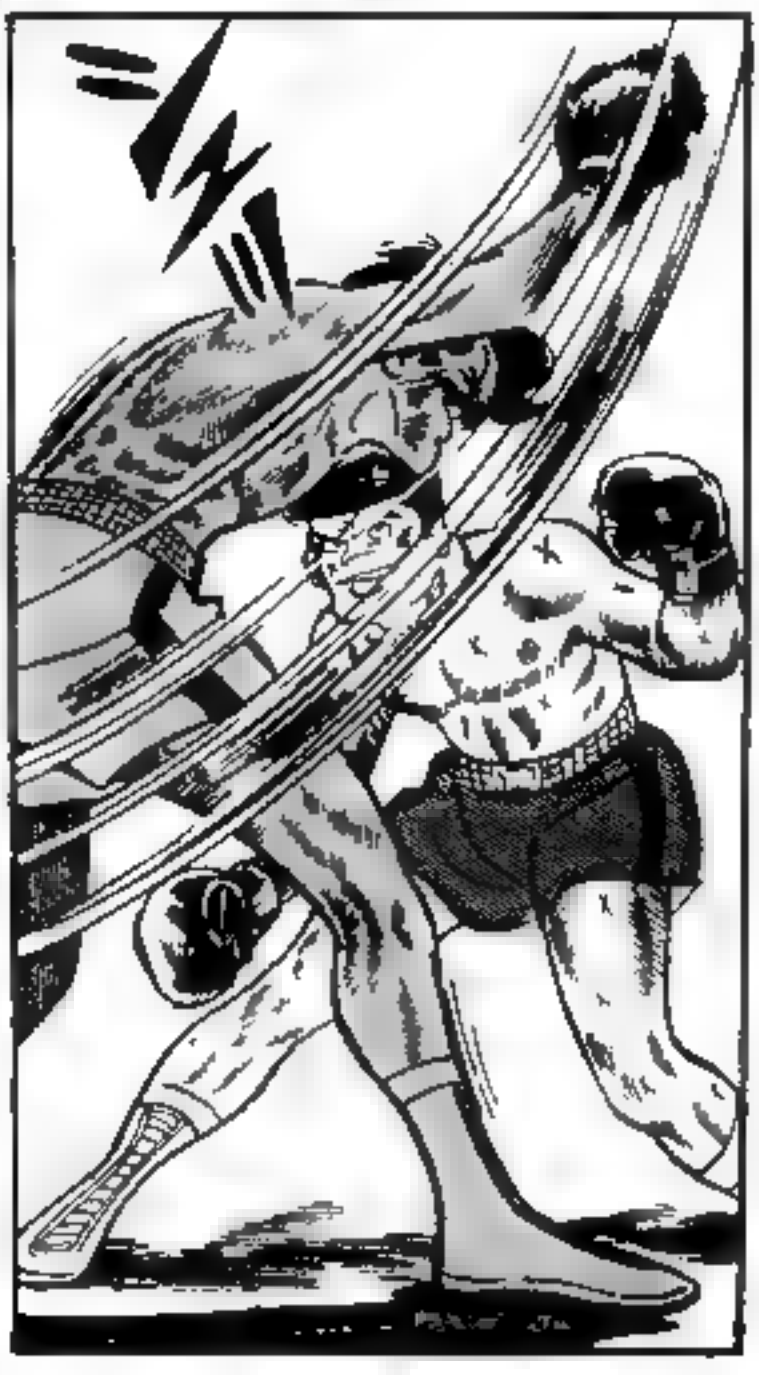
RIKI-

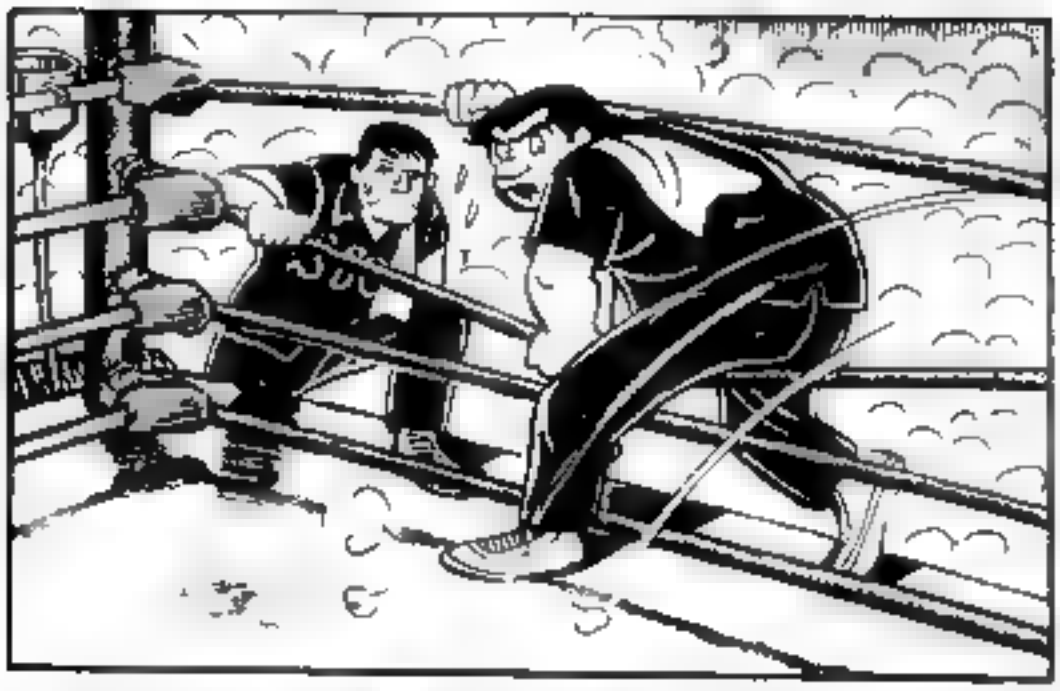
W-WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH YOU, RIKIISHI!? DON'T JUST LET YOURSELF GET ROPED IN!

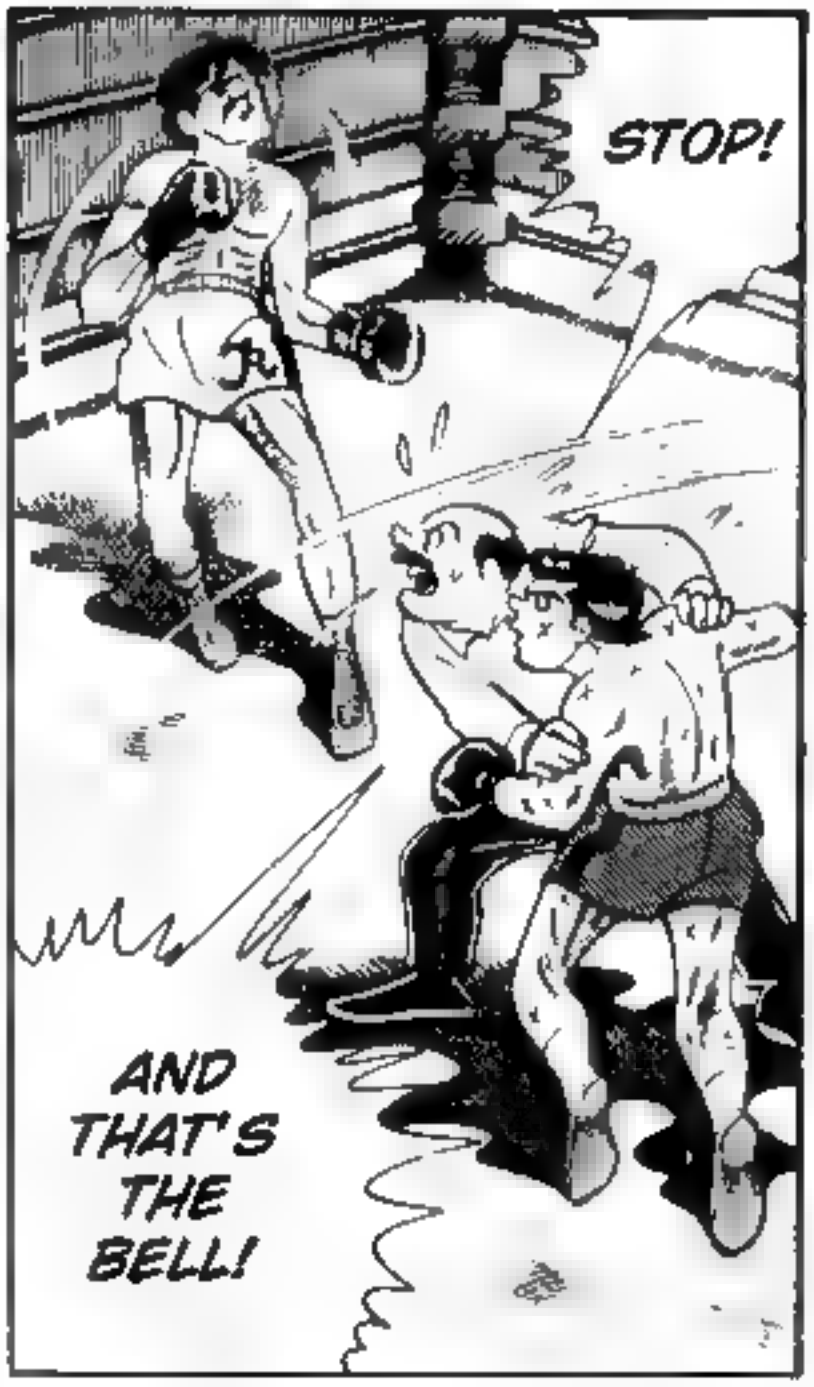
HIT 'IM! START PUNCHING BACK!

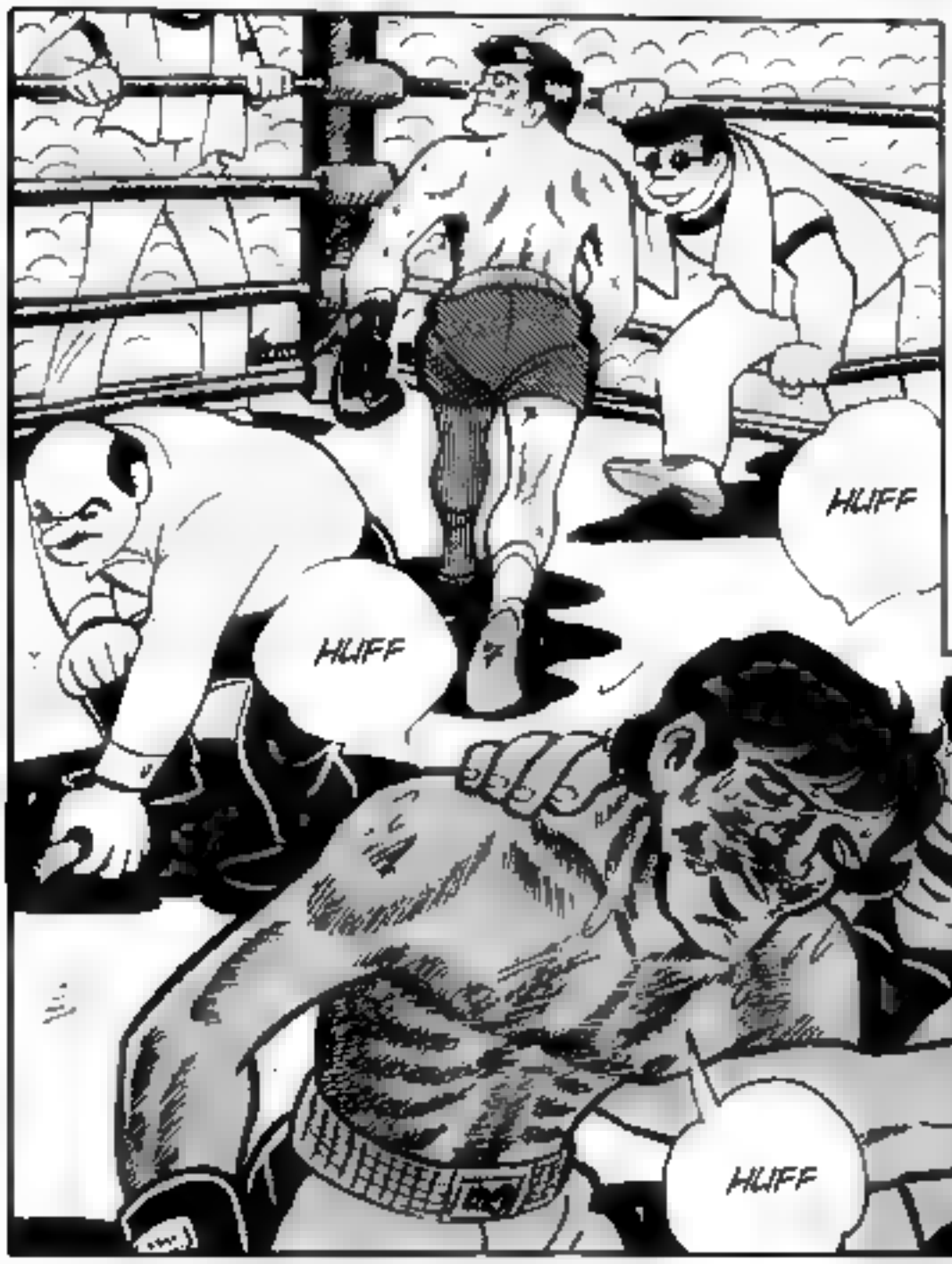
KI-I-I-I

HIHO!






STOP!
AND THAT'S THE BELL!


HUFF
HUFF

W-WHAT WAS THAT...
AH...
WAS THAT REALLY RIKIISHI...?

BUT EVEN SO ...!

I KNOW HE'S HURTING FROM LOSING ALL THAT WEIGHT.

W-WHAT WAS THAT...

ドス!!!

ガイ!

SIT DOWN!

YES, HE UNLEASHED A FLURRY OF JABS, HOOKS, AND STRAIGHTS. AS EXPECTED OF A VETERAN TO MIX UP A WIDE VARIETY OF PUNCHES.

LEO, ON THE OTHER HAND, WAS SPLENDID IN THIS ROUND

AND NEITHER OF THOSE UPPERCUTS MANAGED TO FIND THEIR TARGET!

IN THE END, RIKIISHI ONLY MANAGED TO SWING 2 UPPER-CUTS FOR THAT ENTIRE ROUND 1.

RIKIISHI CAN BARELY STAND OUT THERE, LET ALONE FIGHT!

G-GRAND FATHER...

EVEN IF STANDING WERE THE ONLY THING HE COULD DO, HE WOULD MUCH RATHER DIE THAN TO GIVE UP AND THROW AWAY THE MATCH.

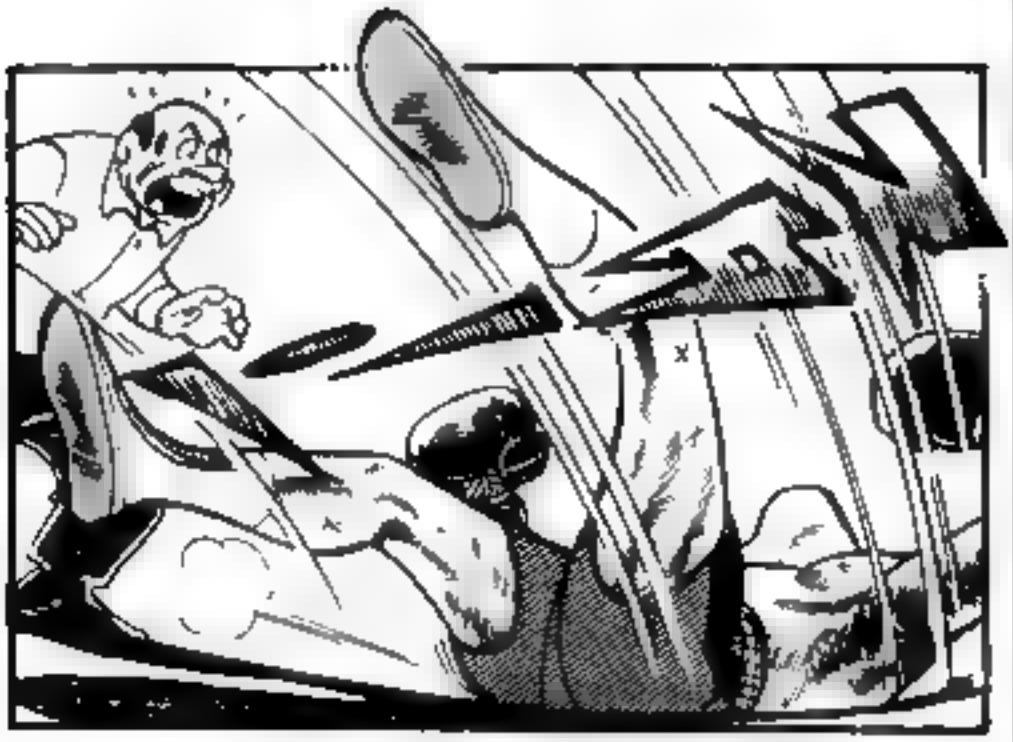
RIKIISHI IS A PRO.

ALL WE NEED TO DO IS JUST WATCH OVER HIM AS HE DOES ALL HE CAN.

IF YOU ADMIT YOURSELF THAT YOU'RE NOT KNOWLEDGEABLE ABOUT BOXING THEN KEEP SILENT!

PLEASE TELL THE SECOND TO THROW IN THE TOWEL!

I MAY NOT KNOW MUCH ABOUT BOXING BUT EVEN I CAN TELL THAT LETTING THIS MATCH CONTINUE ON IS ABSURD!



OHHHH!

BACK TO YOUR NEUTRAL CORNER!

THE UPPER CUT WORKED!
HE DID IT!

ONLY LUCKY HIT!
NO COUNT-DOWN,
ME GON' CONTINUE FIGHT

5!
4!
3!

F-FIGHT!

C'MON! FINISH OFF THAT SCAR-COVERED OLD-TIMER ALREADY!

THAT'S HOW YOU DO IT!

SO THEN ...

AND SEE WHO'S STRONGER ONCE AND FOR ALL,

SO THEN YOU CAN FIGHT ME,

RIKIISHI!

HIHO!

AH...

UGH!
ドドド

HUFF

HUFF

HUFF

PUNCH HIM BACK, RIKIISHI!

PUNCH HIM!

WHAT'RE YOU, A GOD-DAMNED SANDBAG!? DON'T JUST LET YOURSELF GET HIT OVER AND OVER!

GUH.

HIHO!

HO!

HUFF

HUFF

HUFF

HUFF

HUFF

HYO!

HYO!

C'MON!

CRUSH THAT STUPID GRIN OF HIS!

RIKIISHI!

THAT BASTARD'S LAUGHING AT YOU!

GODDAMN IT

IS YOUR HEAD ALRIGHT, RIKIISHI!?

WHY THE HELL DO YOU KEEP ON TRYING TO HIT A GUY AS EXPERI-ENCED AS HIM WITH ONLY YOUR UPPERCUTS!?

DON'T YOU REALIZE YOUR STAMINA'S NOT WHAT IT USED TO BE ANYMORE!?

HM.

IT SEEMS RIKIISHI IS SLOW TO REALIZE THAT HIS OPPONENT LEO HAS CAUGHT ON TO THIS FACT...!

IN BOTH ROUNDS 1 AND 2, RIKIISHI HAS ONLY ATTEMPTED TO HIT WITH HIS UPPERCUTS!

R-RIKIISHI'S RIVAL YABUKI JOE CONTINUES TO YELL FROM THE STANDS BUT THE SITUATION REMAINS UNCHANGED.

IF YOU ASK ME, I'M A LITTLE NERVOUS ABOUT WHY HE'S FIGHTING THE WAY HE IS RIGHT NOW.

IT SEEMS YOU'RE YELLING AT RIKIISHI BECAUSE YOU PITY HIM AND WANT HIM TO DO BETTER BUT .

JOE...

AT THIS RATE, I'M AFRAID THIS MATCH IS ALREADY

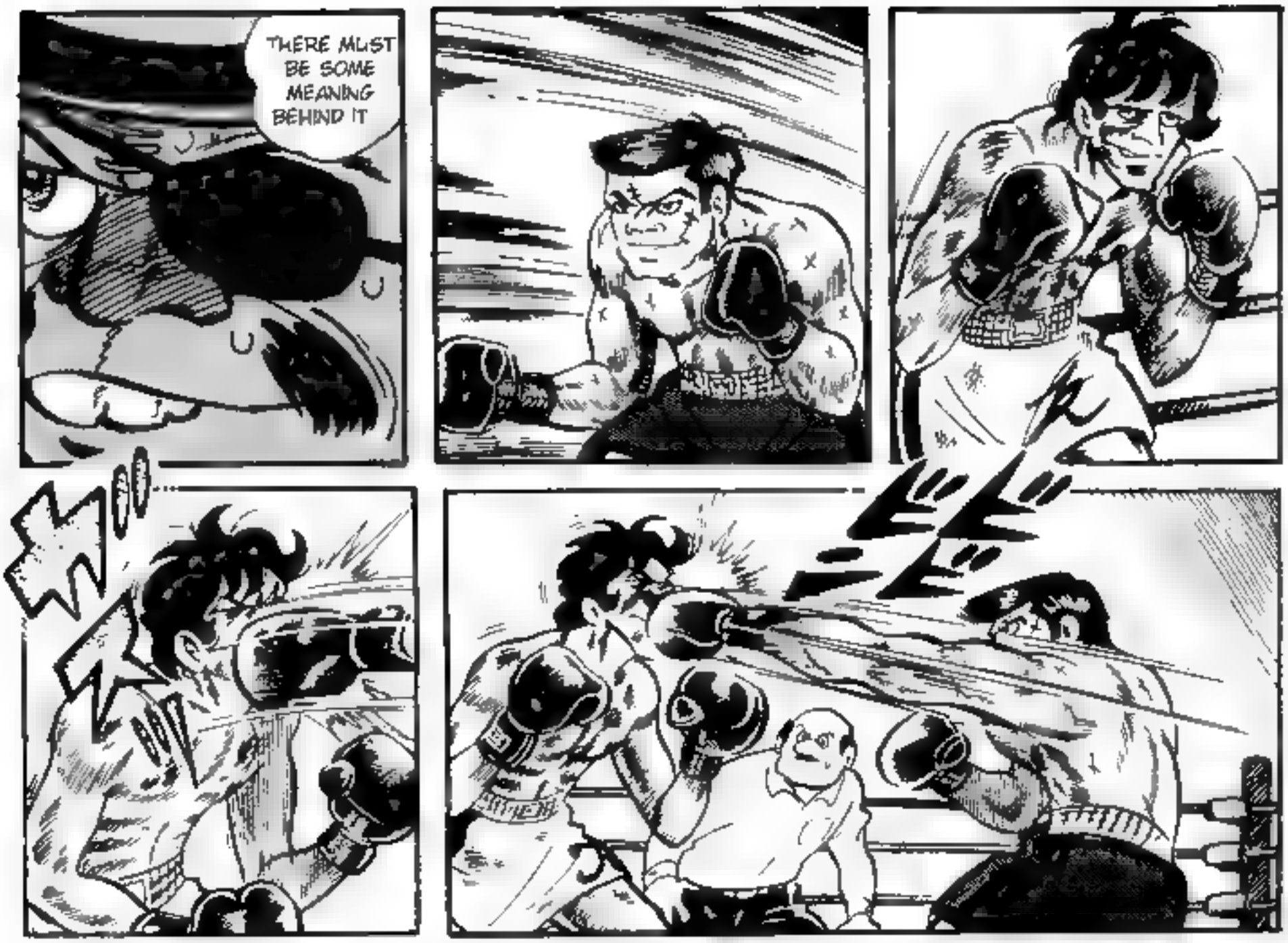
IT SEEMS RIKIISHI'S PHYSICAL PROWESS ISN'T THE ONLY THING THAT HAS DETERIORATED...

THERE'S GOT TO BE SOME-THING TO IT

SO FOR RIKIISHI TO USE ONLY UPPERCUTS OVER AND OVER AGAIN...

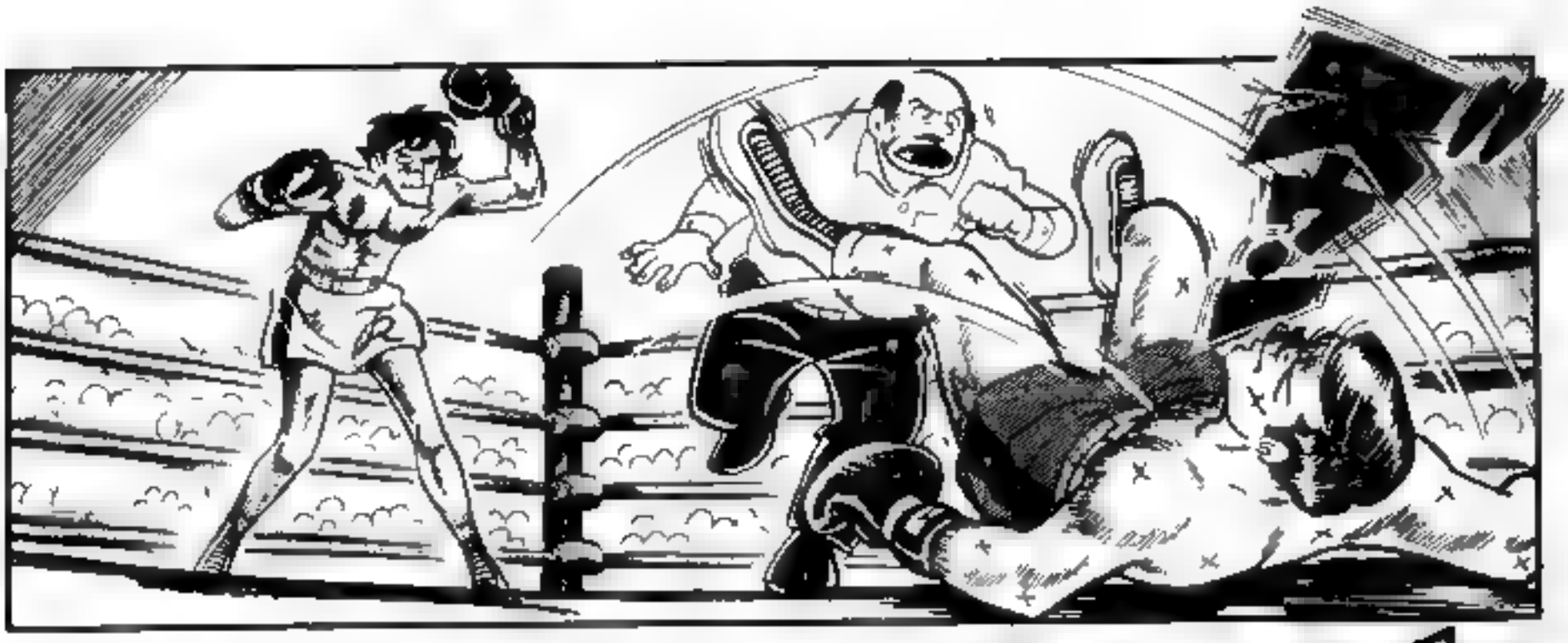
BUT DUE TO IT'S WIDE SWING, AN OPPONENT CAN EASILY ANTICIPATE AND DODGE IT

IT'S TRUE THAT AN UPPERCUT HAS THE HIGHEST CHANCE OF KO'ING AN OPPONENT OUT OF ALL THE PUNCHES,


THERE MUST BE SOME MEANING BEHIND IT
LEO COUNTERS WITH A POWERFUL BLOW TO THE RIBS!
RIKIISH'S UPPERCUT IS EASILY DODGED AGAIN!
UGH!

UGH..

UGH!



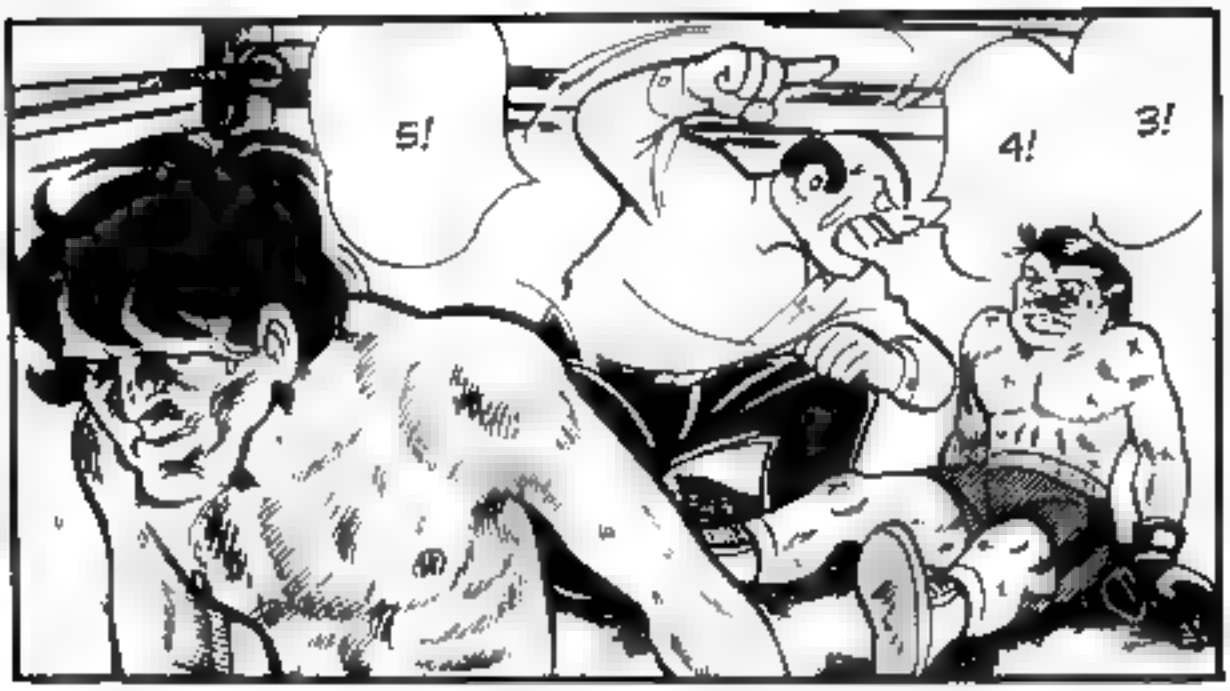
NGH...

BACK TO YOUR CORNER!

I-IT CONNECTED!
HIS UPPERCUT CONN-ECTED AGAIN!
HEH

IF HE GETS BACK UP, YOU KNOCK HIM RIGHT BACK DOWN AGAIN!
THAT'S RIGHT, DON'T LET UP!

7!
6!


5!
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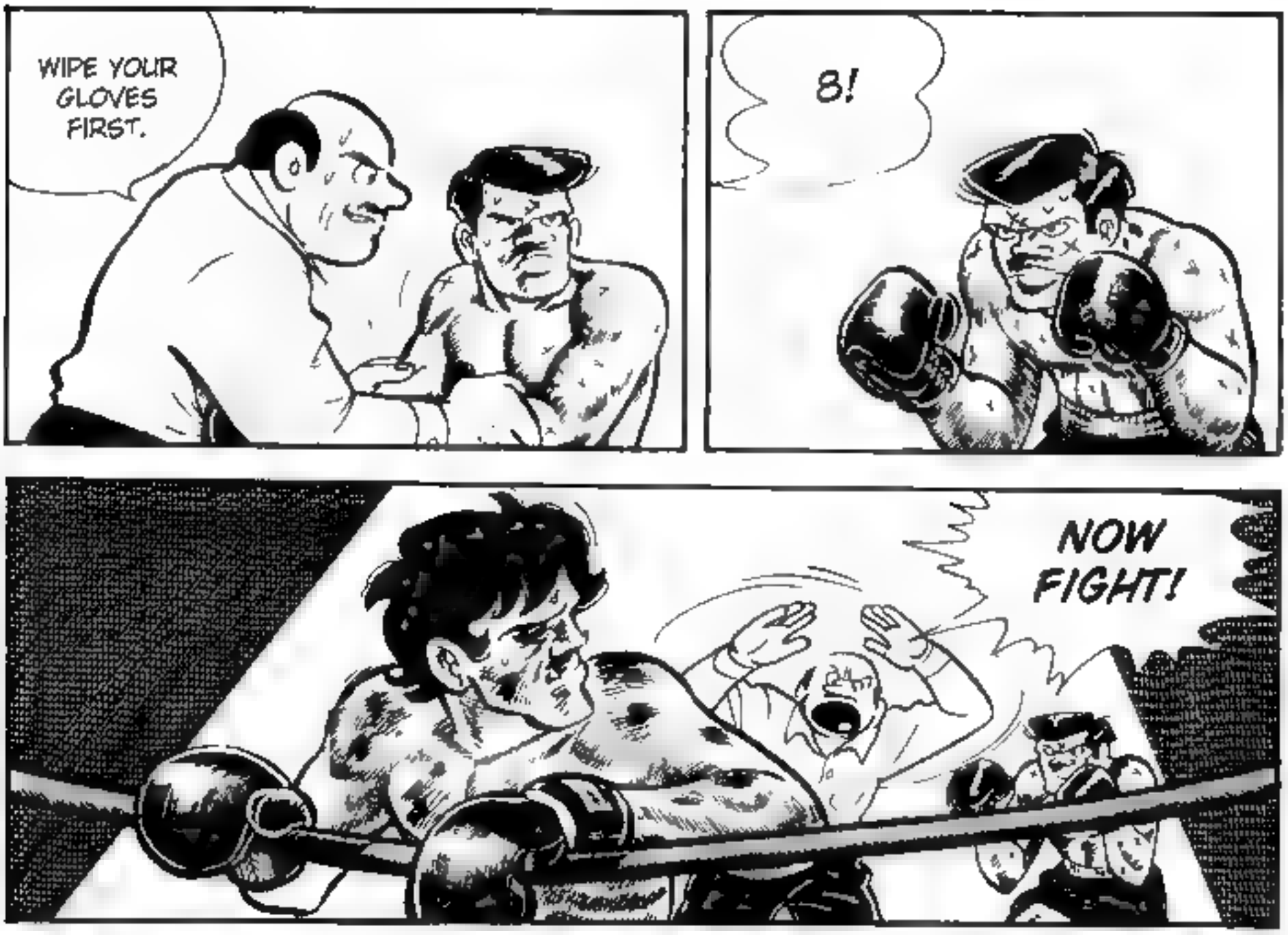

WIPE YOUR GLOVES FIRST.
8!
NOW FIGHT!

COME ON!
USE THAT SPECIAL 3 HIT COMBO OF YOURS TO FINISH HIM OFF!
FINISH HIM!

ANOTHER UPPERCUT?
OR IS AN UPPERCUT THE ONLY THING YOU EVER KNEW HOW TO DO!?
WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH YOU!? DID YOU FORGET ALL YOUR OTHER PUNCHES!?

THIS IS LOOKING VERY BAD FOR RIKIISHI. .!

IF IT WEREN'T FOR THOSE ROPES, I DARESAY HE WOULD'VE BEEN KNOCKED DOWN FOR SURE!

RIKIISHI'S CAUGHT ON THE ROPES AGAIN!

ゴホッ

WITH THAT STARVED BODY OF HIS AND HIS STAMINA QUICKLY BEING DRAINED FROM ALL THE UPPERCUTS, THIS MATCH IS SURE TO END TRAGICALLY FOR HIM!

DID HE SOMEHOW LOSE SO MUCH MUSCLE THAT HIS ARM IS NOW SO DISFIGURED THAT HE CAN ONLY PUNCH STRAIGHT UP OR SOMETHING!?

I SERIOUSLY CAN'T UNDERSTAND WHAT'S GOTTEN INTO HIM!

HE'S TOO USED TO IT!

UPPERCUT'S ARE USELESS ON HIM, RIKIISHI!

A JAB?

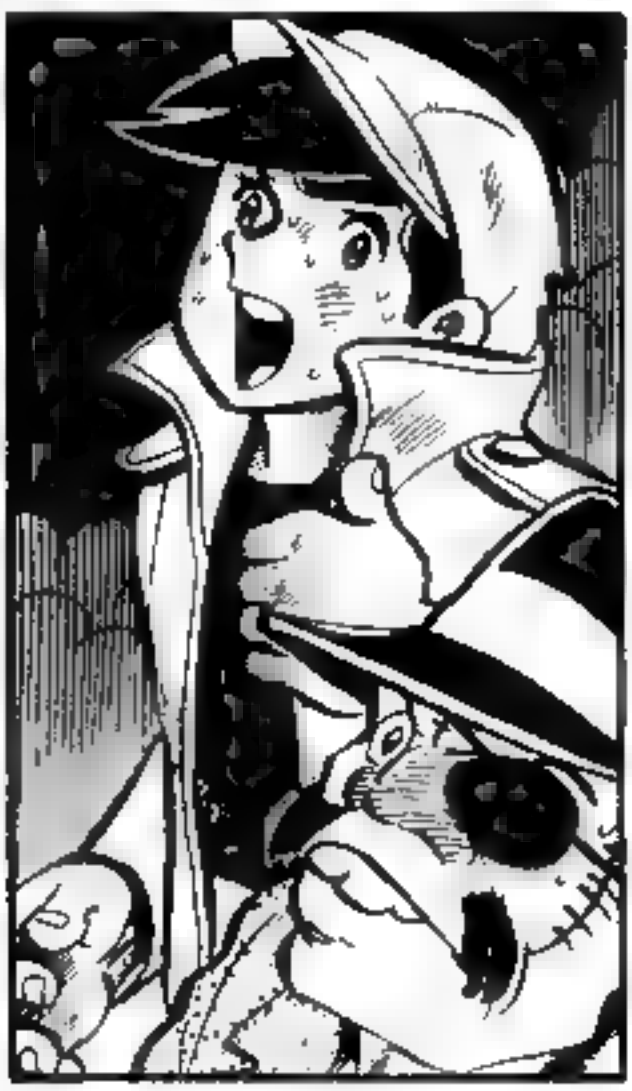
AH!

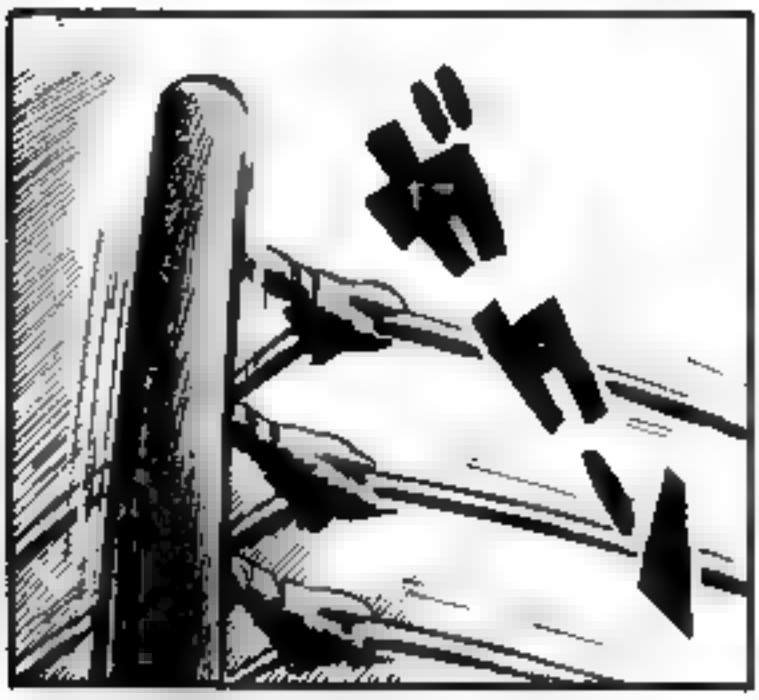
HI!

A JAB!?

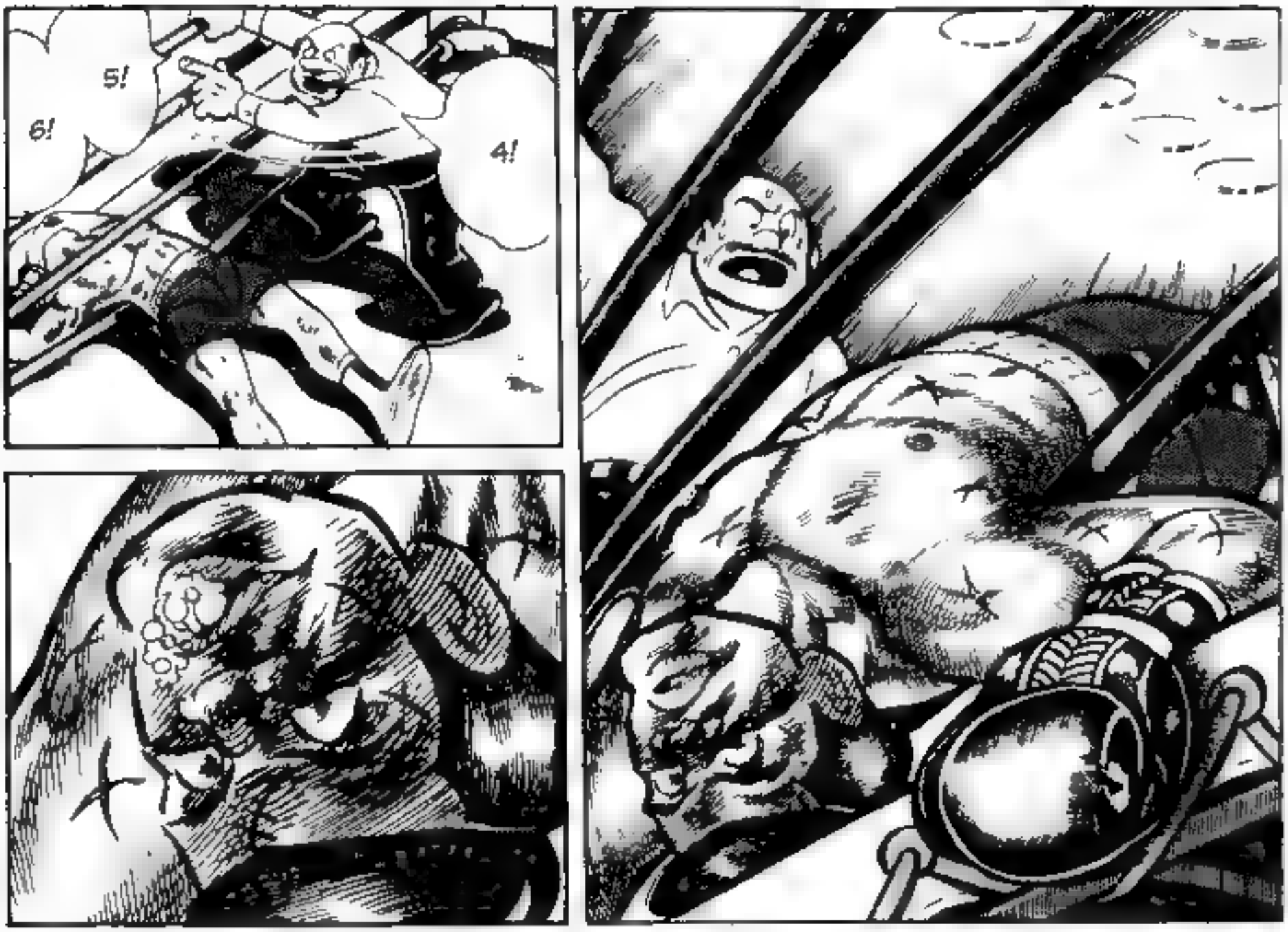
RIKIISHI JABS!

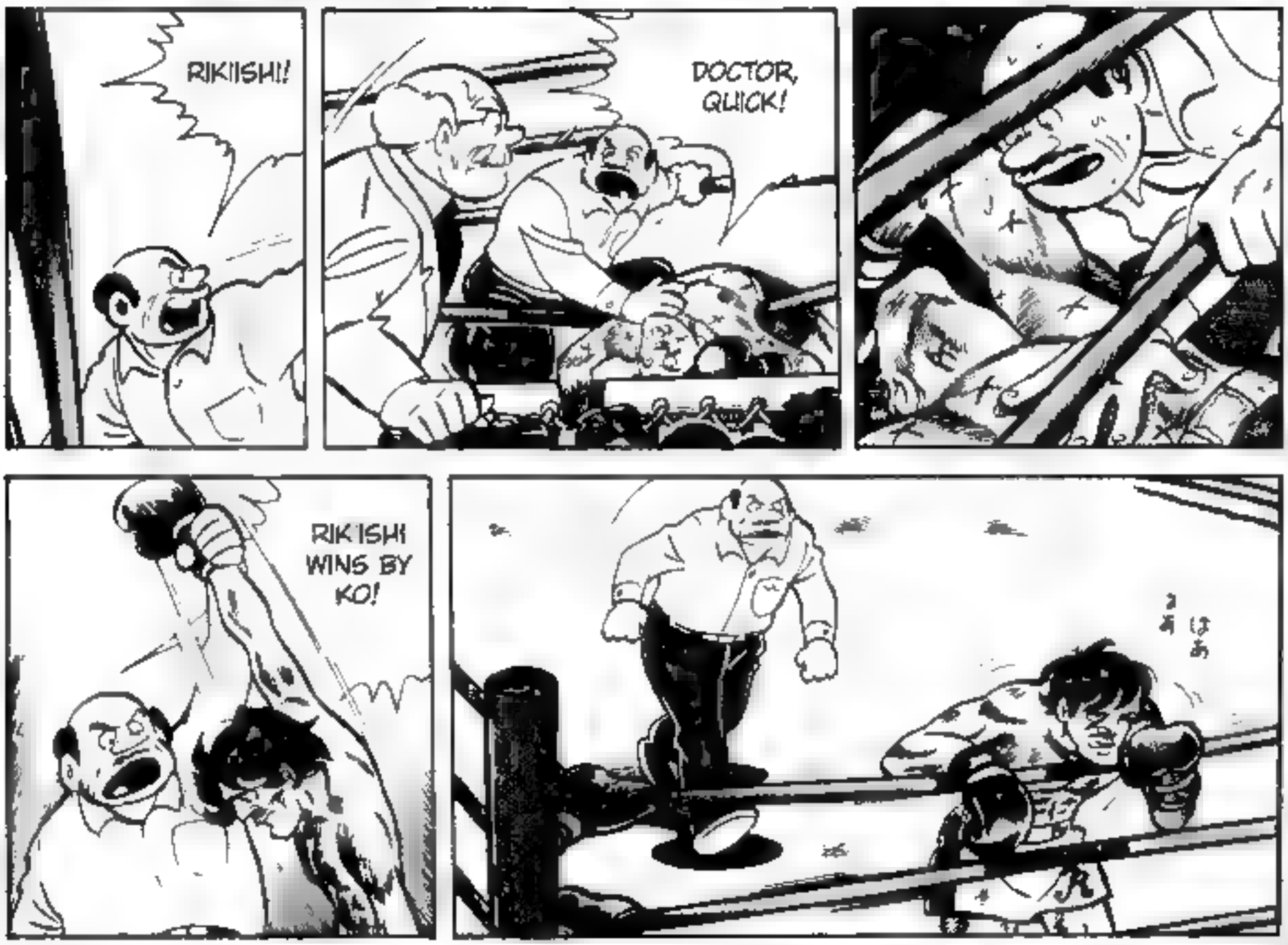
AHH! FOR THE FIRST TIME IN THIS MATCH,





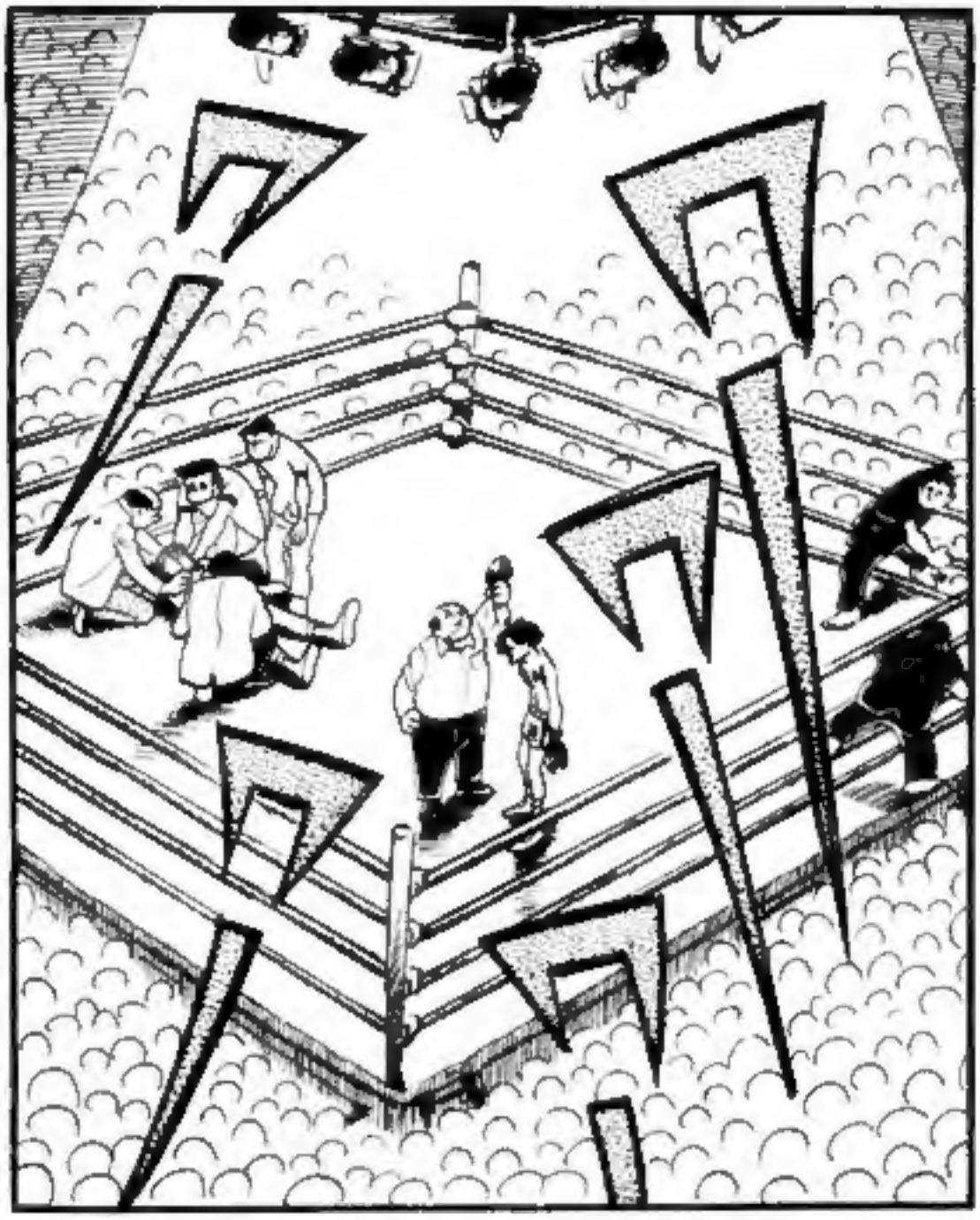
AHH!
AHH!


5!
6!
4!

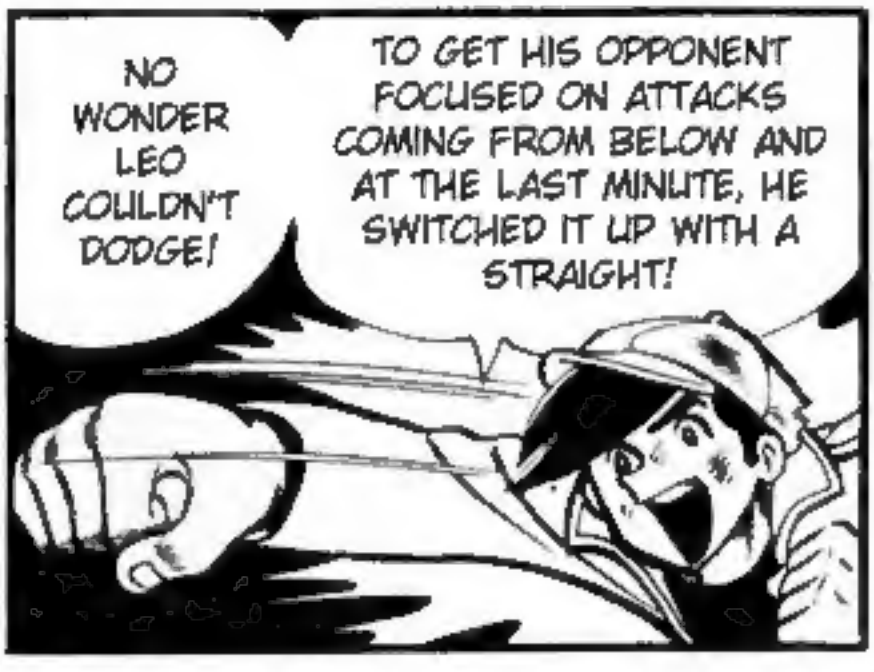

RIKIISHI!
DOCTOR, QUICK!
RIKISHI WINS BY KO!

SO IT'S OVER...

HE PURPOSELY RELIED ONLY ON UPPERCUTS,
I GET IT NOW!
OH!



LET ME SAY THIS ALONE TO YOU RIGHT NOW!
THAT WAS A PRETTY CHILDISH PLAN COMING FROM YOU, RIKIISHI!
BUT YOU KNOW,


NO WONDER LEO COULDN'T DODGE!
TO GET HIS OPPONENT FOCUSED ON ATTACKS COMING FROM BELOW AND AT THE LAST MINUTE, HE SWITCHED IT UP WITH A STRAIGHT!

DON'T EXPECT SUCH CHILDISH TRICKS TO WORK ON ME!

WHA?

YOU SHOULD'VE REALIZED THAT WHAT RIKIISHI SHOWED TODAY WAS A WAY TO SEAL THAT STRATEGY OF YOURS.

THE ONLY FIGHTING STRATEGY THAT YOU HAVE IS THAT NO-GUARD STANCE OF YOURS.

THAT'S RIGHT.

REAL PLAN?

ESPECIALLY WHEN YOU DON'T EVEN UNDERSTAND RIKIISHI'S REAL PLAN.

STOP SCREAMING YOUR HEAD OFF.

AND BECAUSE IT DOESN'T CHANGE ONE'S CENTER OF GRAVITY, COUNTERING IT WILL BE IMPOSSIBLE, LET ALONE USING A CROSS-COUNTER.

BUT AN UPPERCUT DOESN'T CAUSE ONE TO LEAN IN FORWARDS.

YOUR TRADEMARK CROSS-COUNTERS ARE ONLY EFFECTIVE BECAUSE IT HITS OPPONENTS AS THEY LEAN IN FORWARDS WITH A STRAIGHT.

RIKIISHI STILL RELIED ONLY ON HIS UPPERCUTS TO WORK ON HIS TIMING SO THAT HE'LL BE ABLE TO CONNECT PROPERLY WHEN HE'S FIGHTING YOU.

EVEN THOUGH HE'S SUFFERING THROUGH ALL THAT PAIN FROM THE SEVERE WEIGHT LOSS, NOT TO MENTION FIGHTING AN EXPERIENCED OPPONENT,

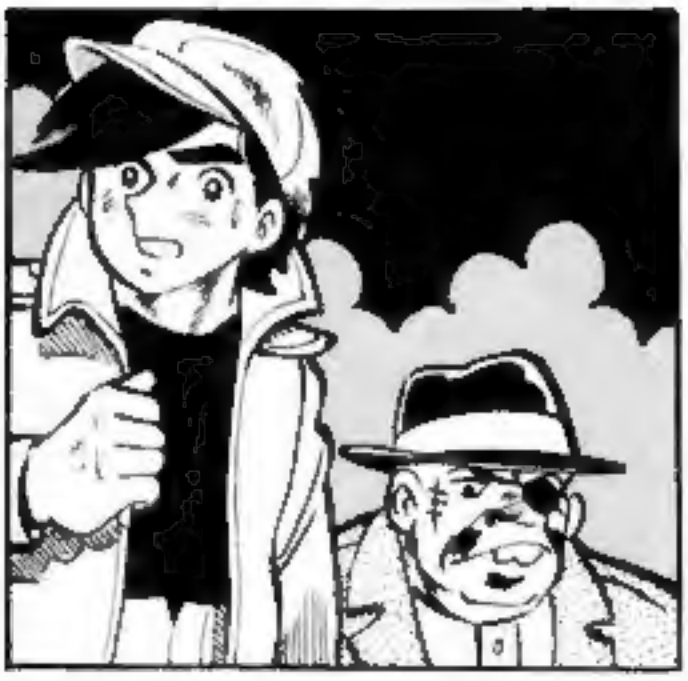
AH...!

...

I HAVE A GOOD FEELING THAT HE STILL HAS MORE CUNNING STRATEGIES TO USE AGAINST YOU...

IT SEEMS THIS IS ONLY THE BEGINNING OF HIS UPPERCUT STRATEGY.

SUCH COMPOSURE SHOWN EVEN AS HE'S SUFFERING...



TRANSLATED BY HOX

あなたは、この本を読んで、どんな感想をおもちになりましたか。

編集部では、この本についての読者のみなさまのご意見をおまちしています。

このつぎには、どんな作家のどんな漫画を読みたいと、お考えですか。「KCデラックス」にしてほしいと思う作品がありましたら、「読後の感想」とあわせて、左記あてに、どしどしお知らせください。

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